- Mahatma Gandhi denies sex charges
- Getting rich off the homeless
- The hospital without patients
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The Washington Monthly

JULY-AUGUST 1987/$3.00

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Issues of the Information Age:

The way beyond Babel.

Imagine trying to build a railroad system if every locomotive manufacturer used a different track gauge. Every local stretch of railroad had its own code of signals. And in order to ride a train, you needed to know the gauges and the signals and the switching procedures and the route and the conductor's odd pronunciation of the station names.

The business of moving and managing information is in a similar state today. Machines can't always talk to each other. Proprietary systems and networks abound, with suppliers often jockeying to make theirs the de facto standard. The enormous potential of the Information Age is being dissipated by incompatibility.

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LETTERS

What violence warrants

I thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated your cover story on domestic violence ["Everyone Knows Wife Beating Goes On," Joan Meier, May]. The article was tragically accurate.

NANCY INGHAM
Morristown, New Jersey
Nancy Ingham is children's program coordinator for Jersey Battered Women's Service, Inc.

As a lawyer with 14 years experience in misdemeanor court, where most of the spouse abuse cases are first taken, I can say that the problem of domestic violence cannot be solved there.

I have made the following observations concerning domestic violence. It usually involves men assaulting women because men are larger and stronger. Women would commit the same number of assaults on men if the female of the species was larger. Alcohol is usually involved to some extent by one or both parties. Financial inadequacy in the household is usually present. Emotional and social immaturity on the part of one or both parties is usually present. Ignorance of other available means of dispute resolution is pervasive.

Our courts usually have two options: fines or imprisonment. Neither is helpful to restoring a family. The courts not only are responsible to try the accused, but are the guardians of our individual liberty. The courts must operate under rules founded on our Constitution and precedents to protect the innocent.

Hard though it may be to understand when vengeance is uppermost in the victim's mind, to grant an accused a fair trial according to law is indeed supporting "victim's rights."

The only place where the government can solve the problem is in the legislatures of the several states. Some ancillary cause of action in domestic relations court seems to offer the quickest solution.

DONALD L. WHITE
Louisville, Kentucky

I am writing to object to your article on wife beating. While I understand the value of raising your readers' consciousness about the lethal nature of this problem by presenting shocking anecdotes about criminal justice system failures and atrocities, I question the utility of presenting such an overwhelmingly negative and distorted view of *current* criminal justice system response.

This article's unwarranted negativism may discourage further victims from calling the police and reinforce batterers' notions that nothing will be done to hold them accountable for their violence.

Having worked for the past decade with police departments in reshaping their domestic violence policies and procedures, I can attest to how far the police profession has progressed in the past ten years. I understand completely that much still needs to be done, that some police departments remain unresponsive, and that, in particular, the Washington, D.C. police department is lagging behind. But I do know from working with more than 100 police departments across the nation that there are many departments that regard domestic violence as a *priority crime problem* and have adopted tough arrest policies. In fact, in 1986, 44 percent of major city police departments had pro-arrest policies, up from only 10 percent (15 of 146) departments in 1984. In 1976, the International Association of Chiefs of Police—the most conservative police chiefs group—defined wife beating as criminal behavior and endorsed arrest as the preferred response.

Let me also indicate inaccuracies in the article: "Reluctance to arrest is corroborated by studies in the late seventies in Colorado and California. . . ." That was ten years ago. The 1986 Uniform Crime Report for New Jersey shows some counties making arrests in over 50 to 60 percent of domestic violence calls.

"The hands-off approach that still operates in most police departments. . . ." *Most* police departments? This is a totally unproven assertion and is contraindicated by battered women's advocates, as well as police chiefs, in numerous cities all over the country.

"Identification with the male attacker. . ." This is a ridiculous and prejudicial stereotype. The cops certainly have changed their beliefs about shelters; I'd assumed advocates had also left behind their

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stereotypes of police.

The results of the New Jersey public opinion survey are misconstrued. The two-thirds percentage quoted was in response to a question asking about police responses in cases where the victim does not suffer serious physical injuries. However, a full 84 percent of the respondents agreed that police should be called, and in another question, 55 percent said they believe strict law enforcement is an effective way to protect women and children against domestic violence.

NANCY LOVING
Washington, D.C.

Nancy Loving is executive director of the Center on Family Violence.

Joan Meier replies:

Nancy Loving rightfully points out that some police departments (she offers nothing about the rest of the "criminal justice system") are far ahead of others in their policies regarding domestic violence. However, I was surprised at her claim that most police departments no longer pose problems in light of her acknowledgment to me that, except in a few departments, domestic violence is not a "real priority" unless a chief or someone important is participating.

Loving's only empirical support for her view appears to be the survey that concluded 44 percent of major police departments have "preferred" (not "pro-arrest") policies for arrest. The significance of this number has been vastly overstated, since it does not reflect written or widely accepted policies, but merely the "official line" given by "the domestic violence expert" (if there was one) in each department. At least one officer from a department on the list indicated to me that his department didn't have a policy of preferring arrest, and didn't know how it had gotten into that category. Moreover, as the director of the survey pointed out to me, even in departments with aggressive mandatory arrest policies, officers often don't know or don't follow the policy.

Loving's claim that "identification with the male attacker" is "a ridiculous and prejudicial stereotype" is certainly not shared by Baltimore County Detective Don Pfouts, who runs one of the good programs Loving refers to. Pfouts has stated that there is a "male prejudice" and a "fear of women's rights" that contributes to their reluctance to take action in these cases.

I also stand by my characterization of the New Jersey opinion poll as demonstrating that many people are still ambivalent about criminalization of domestic violence. The issue is not whether people believe in *calling* the police, or advocate "strict law enforcement" in the abstract, but whether they believe that measures such as arrest and jail are appropriate. The polls showed that two-thirds of those interviewed rejected arrest as an option where the woman had been injured, but not to the extent of requiring medical attention. Moreover, only one-third of respondents thought attackers should be jailed for repeatedly beating their wives.

Loving has devoted herself to reforming police policies but she appears to be engaging in wishful thinking that the problem is merely a result of inap-

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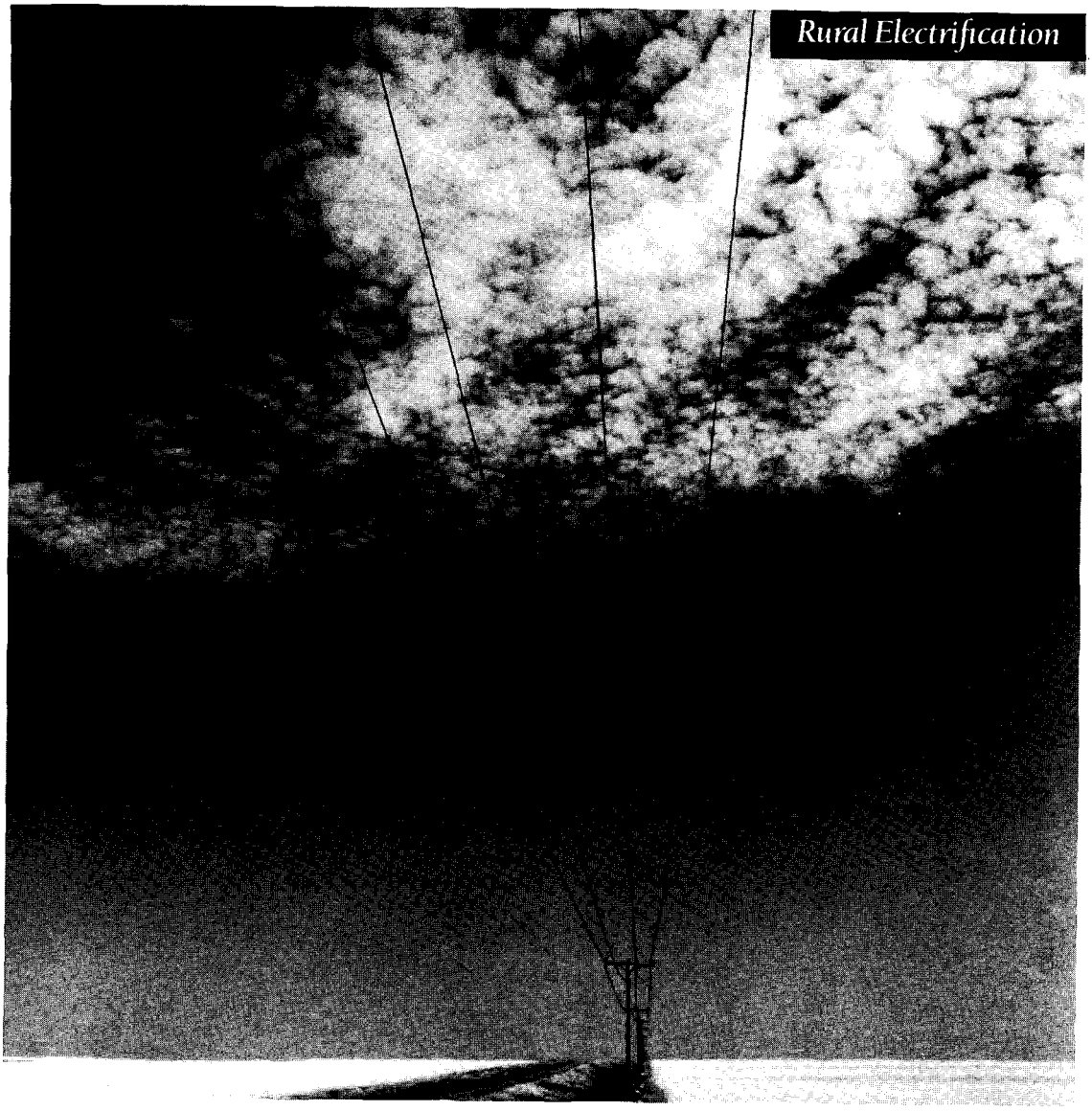

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propriate policies, which, with a little tinkering, can be remedied. But it is simply not possible that centuries of ingrained behaviors and attitudes have been erased with even a decade of programmatic reforms.

No compromises

In ["Tommy the Cork: The Secret World of Washington's First Modern Lobbyist," Allan J. Lichtman, February] inappropriate and inaccurate comments are made concerning my father, the late Bennett Champ Clark.

The statement is made that my father was recruited by Mr. Corcoran as a "front man" for the commission of a "serious crime bordering on treason" and the inference is clearly made that he would have compromised his status as justice of the United States Court of Appeals to commit such a crime. Professor Lichtman clearly is not familiar with my father's statement in the famous Dollar case that President Truman had no more influence in his court than any other citizen of this country.

The accuracy of this madcap account is suggested by Professor Lichtman's false statement that the former Senator D. Worth Clark and my father were cousins. No family relationship in any way, shape, or form existed between our two families.

KIMBALL CLARK
Arlington, Virginia

Professor Lichtman replies:

The statement cited in the letter in no way refutes the specific documented involvement of Bennett Clark in Tommy the Cork's Lever brothers campaign. My analysis rested not on inferences about Bennett Clark, but upon specific conversations recorded in the Corcoran tapes. Whether or not there was any familial relationship between Bennett and D. Worth Clark (as the tapes *do* indicate) is likewise irrelevant to the accuracy of my account.

Friends and influence

Charles Peters gets wrong the story of David Ormsby-Gore's appointment as British Ambassador in the Kennedy era ["The Kennedy Hustle," May] and thus gives the British government unearned credit for sophisticated political manipulation. Ormsby-Gore was appointed ambassador because Kennedy specifically requested him; they had become friends, I believe, during Kennedy's year at the London School of Economics. Thus Ormsby-Gore did not need to "establish himself as Kennedy's favorite diplomat" in order to become a frequent guest at the White House.

The appointment was an unusual one, probably made reluctantly by the Foreign Office (although of course it gave them a more influential ambassador than they could otherwise have expected), and illustrates, if anything, only the power of the U.S. presidency. Normally, British ambassadors are from the career service, and Ormsby-Gore was a politician, who had to give up a seat in the House of Commons—and possibly his political career—to take the ambassadorial post.

MARTIN C. NEEDLER
Albuquerque, New Mexico

OOPS—We incorrectly identified the author of *The Burger Years* as Herbert Schwartz in our June issue. It should have been Herman Schwartz.

Sinking feeling

I was pleased to read in your May issue an extract from my book *Shinano* ["The Sinking of a Supercarrier"].

However, I am distressed that you suggest the former secretary of the navy, the Honorable John F. Lehman, was wrong to recommend strongly that two new aircraft carriers be constructed. Based upon my six years of duty in the Pentagon, I am certain that the secretary correctly made that decision from the conclusions reached after long and careful examinations of all the requirements for the defense of the United States.

Within a month of the *Shinano* sinking, the Japanese Naval Ministry convened a Board of Investigation of a dozen admirals to determine the cause of the loss. The board's highly classified report contained the following conclusions: "The builder, her crew, and the Yokosuka Naval Station Headquarters in charge of her steaming operation were responsible for the disaster." Please note there is no blame attached that could not, and would not be avoided by the U.S. Navy.

JOSEPH F. ENRIGHT
Dover, Massachusetts

Ethical cavity

There are many dentists who come out of school with large debts ["Tilting at Windmills," May], but that does not mean they would sell unnecessary dentistry to their patients. Eight years ago I knew a young dentist who graduated with what seemed like a large debt. He went to work for a large group practice in Washington, D.C. run by a group of older, more experienced dentists. He resigned after six months because the older dentists demanded that he do certain procedures which were not necessary according to the training he obtained in dental school. One of the managing dentists even told him that "academic dentistry" was not dentistry as it is practiced in the "real world"; in the real world you have to produce.

Ethics, morals, honesty, and professionalism have nothing to do with age, degrees, letters after one's name, or one's economic situation. Older dentists and professionals need as much, if not more, money to pay for their cars, mortgages, and other material things to keep up with the Dr. Joneses, etc.

HENRY LEE
Olney, Maryland

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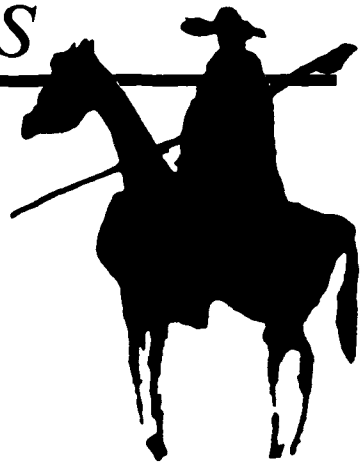
TILTING AT WINDMILLS



Summit conferences like the one held in Venice in June are becoming like the conventions American businessmen hold. Nothing really happens, but everyone has a nice time in a nice place. And the press doesn't object. If you could put lunch at the Cipriani and dinner at the Gritti Palace on your expense account, you probably wouldn't either.

The only solution I can see is for the UN to pass a resolution saying all future summits must be held in either Buffalo or Liverpool. Then we can be sure that the event will not take place unless it is of truly vital importance. . . .

For pure sell-out the FAA remains the champion agency in Washington. Why am I so intemperate you ask, how could I so depart from my customary spirit of reason and good will? I will explain. I just read a story headlined "FAA Puts Lid On Baggage in Airplanes." I was excited—at last the FAA was doing something about all the guys who stagger aboard with their golf clubs, electric typewriters, and three or four bags that look like they're stuffed with bowling balls, placing them in flimsy overhead racks, the doors of which you know would fly open at the slightest turbulence and expose you to decapitation by a No. 5 iron.

I had just returned from a journey on British Airways which has limited carry-on luggage to one per person, so I knew a rational rule was possible. But on closer reading, the story revealed that all the FAA had done was to tell the airlines that they had six months to establish their own limits on the size and number of items that can be carried aboard.

There was no federal requirement, as I had hoped, of only one bag of a limited size and weight. I mention weight because common sense tells you that there is only a certain number of pounds any given plane can keep in the air. Yet you realize no one weighs carry-on luggage, and passengers have brought aboard, as Matthew Finucane, safety director of the Association of Flight Attendants attests, "truck tires, even a drive shaft from a BMW." . . .

My greatest regret about the Hart tragedy is his probable permanent removal from public office. He is almost as unlikely to regain his seat in the Senate as he is to be

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elected president. He can hardly run against his friend and fellow Democrat, Tim Wirth, and he would have great difficulty defeating Bill Armstrong, the other senator from Colorado, who is a highly popular Republican in a state where conservative instincts are strong. This is too bad, because, while Hart as president may not have been a good thing, Hart as senator was a very good thing indeed. His weird side did not keep him from ranking among the top ten senators in both brainpower and originality. He also might make a good secretary of defense, but I'm afraid the next Democratic president won't be able to face the flurry of Donna Rice photographs that would accompany the appointment....

The crewmen of the *USS Stark* had not been trained with a realistic simulation of an Exocet missile attack. That is what British naval experts told Peter Almond of *The Washington Times* shortly after the *Stark* was hit. His British sources told Almond that the U.S. Navy has nothing to simulate an Exocet. The Navy uses a TDU-34 flying target and its lowest altitude is said to be 250 feet compared to the 15 of the Exocet....

Our reaction to the attack on the *Stark* puzzles me. The missiles that damaged it were launched by a plane belonging to Iraq, not Iran or the USSR. Yet we respond by announcing that we will protect the tankers of Kuwait, an ally of Iraq, an action that seems to be directed against Iran, and is explained by us as really designed to guard against Soviet expansionism.

If Europe and Japan want to protect the oil being shipped to them, not us, from the Persian Gulf, let them do so. I think it would be a splendid idea to have European ships patrolling the Gulf with the Japanese paying the bill. We could, perhaps should, help out on the basis that all nations have an interest in preserving the freedom of the seas, but we should not have to bear the whole burden and then have to endure more lectures from the Japanese and Europeans about our deficit. And we should not become involved in aid for just one side as we are now doing in our plan to escort Kuwait's tankers....

In 1981, Mrs. Tama Jackson of Washington went to the Washington Hospital Center to see her baby who was in an incubator. But the baby was missing. I am indebted to William Hines of *The Washington Post* for reconstructing the dialogue that followed:

"Where's my baby?"
"He's not here."
"Where is he?"
"Intensive care."
"Why?"
"Something happened."
"What happened?"
"He overheated."

The incubator had overheated. Evidence in a suit the Jacksons brought against the hospital showed that the incubator had a faulty off-on switch, a broken thermostat, and an inoperative alarm. The child died.

Six years later the FDA still has failed to write safety regulations governing incubators. There are 1,100 medical devices like incubators and pacemakers for which the FDA is supposed to write standards. At least two pacemakers have failed, one causing permanent brain damage to its user. The FDA says it doesn't have the money to hire the staff to write the regulations....

A Senate staff member recently sent us a copy of a letter that he thought our readers might find interesting: "Dear Senator Baucus: *The Washington Post* wants to thank the members of the 100th Session of the United States Congress for their continued support," it begins, continuing with a paragraph that deserves careful perusal:

"It is because of your readership that *The Washington Post* has been selected as an important communications link between the nation's legislators and America's freight railroad industry. *The Washington Post* is used regularly by this vital American industry to express the views of the Association of American Railroads (the voice of the freight railroad industry) to Congress. We have enclosed a reprint of the first ad in the Association's new 1987 campaign."

The letter is signed by Nicholas Cannistraro Jr., a vice-president of the *Post*.

It is one thing to run an ad like the railroads'; it is quite another to give the paper's implied endorsement to the ad with a letter such as this....

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Ten years ago, the Congress told the EPA to regulate the handling of hazardous wastes. But as of today, according to a GAO report, the EPA has placed controls on less than 10 percent of the wastes considered potentially hazardous. It cannot, the report continues, "even say if it is regulating the worst wastes in terms of potential impact on human health and the environment." Sounds a bit like the FDA and those incubators doesn't it?...

Sometimes the public statements of government officials have to be disavowed by their agencies. The ultimate example may have occurred in May in regard to a statement made by S. Bruce Smart, the undersecretary of commerce. Here's how *The New York Times* reported what happened next:

"Desiree Tucker, a Commerce Department spokeswoman, said later that day that Mr. Smart was not speaking for himself or for the Commerce Department."...

For years I have been maddened by the hiring practices of the public schools. Ordinarily they select new teachers solely on the basis of paper credentials, with an occasional personal interview thrown in. At last, Arlington County, Virginia, is doing what should be done. They're *auditioning*, letting the applicant demonstrate whether he or she has the ability to teach in a classroom. It is truly bizarre that other school systems don't do this....

Did you know that social security funds are being used to pay the salaries of 74 employees of the Department of Health and Human Services who spend all their time working not for the government but for a labor union? Social security funds have also been used to finance trips by these union officials to a "conference" in Las Vegas and a "seminar" in Acapulco. This story, which was originally developed by K.W. Lee and Michael Otten of *The Sacramento Union*, has been confirmed by Isaiah J. Poole of *The Washington Times*. The cost to the social security fund was $4.4 million last year and will rise to $6 million this year....

"Whether we like it or not, the purchase of the wrong vehicle can mean social disaster or worse," writes Brock Yates in *The Washington Post Magazine*. Yates warns that, while the Porsche 911 Carrera was "once the ultimate sports icon," it is now "beginning to fall into the gold-chained, divorced, orthodontist crowd."

What car are people who don't want to be mistaken for orthodontists buying these days? Since California is the trend-setter in automotive purchasing, I asked a friend out there what they're driving along Rodeo Drive. The answer was Jaguars. I then checked with my agent in England who told me, "As a matter of fact, old boy, your man in California is absolutely right, the Jaguar is selling like hotcakes. Just set a new production record."

If California is the trend-setter, things look bad for the American automobile industry. The top four makes in terms of new car registration nationally were all American last year. The top four in California were all foreign.

And it's not just foreign cars the Californians are buying. Even though the dollar's decline has made imports more expensive than ever, Kathleen Hughes of *The Wall Street Journal* recently found Californians flocking to buy luxury products from abroad. When she asked one man why he was willing to pay $69 a bottle for Dom Perignon champagne—56 percent more than a year ago—he replied, "I noticed the increase but I got it anyway. People like it because it's statusy." Since my taste buds aren't sensitive enough to tell the difference between Dom Perignon and a domestic champagne costing a tenth as much, I buy the domestic brand and try not to worry about my status.

That seems to me to be the point. To buy a foreign car or a foreign wine because you really like it is fine. But to buy it because it impresses other people—because you don't want them to think you're an orthodontist—is absurd....

During my seven years of traveling for the Peace Corps, I was struck more by the similarities of the countries of the Third World than by their differences.

The one that delighted me most was the ubiquitous bus, usually painted in bright colors, and always seeming one step away from the junk

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heap, where the seat across the aisle often was occupied by some chickens or sacks of grain and sometimes even a squealing pig.

The most disturbing was the press, which was either for sale to the highest bidder, or dominated by the government, or both. I was reminded of all this by two recent articles in the *Los Angeles Times*. One about the Mexican press:

"A front page story favorable to a ministry can mean cash for the reporter.... Arturo Durazo, the former Mexico City police chief who is on trial on extortion charges is said to have asked reporters into which pocket they would like the money deposited, the right or the left."

A few agencies don't pay bribes. What is the reaction of the crusading reporters? "Many," according to the *Times*, "try to avoid working a non-paying beat."

Another story is headlined "Press Alive and Well in Nigeria" because, as the author explains, it's about the only country in Africa where the press is not regularly censored by the government....

Few people realize that while the income tax is going down, or at least is supposed to, the social security tax has increased to the point where, according to a recent article in *The New York Times*, "in a majority of cases now, workers pay less in federal income taxes than they and their employers do in social security taxes."

The burden is, of course, worse for those who can afford it the least. A married worker with two children earning $8,000 a year will pay $572 for social security this year. And the figure is rising. By 1990, he or she will have to pay $612.

So will his employer. And if his employer is in a marginal business, making little or no profit, he may have to let the worker go. In this way, the social security tax acts as a disincentive to employment.

If, on the other hand, *The Washington Monthly*'s plan were adopted and social security were financed through the income tax, neither the low-wage worker nor the profitless employer would have to pay anything. Social security would be paid for by the individuals and companies who could afford to pay for it and given not to the affluent but only to those who need it.

By the way, if, as seems probable, our means test isn't adopted for the payment of social security benefits, the next best thing is to tax the benefits fully. Now, at most, 50 percent of the benefits are taxed. If they were all taxed the Urban Institute estimates more than $11 billion in additional revenue would be raised annually. That would put a nice dent in the deficit....

"Let Hinckley Go" was the title of a column that Charles Krauthammer recently wrote for *The Washington Post*. I disagree completely. Hinckley is the kind of criminal I would keep in confinement for life. He shot in cold blood, seriously wounding people he didn't even know. That kind of person is so self-centered he has no feeling for other people at all. The kind of criminal who should be let out after serving a reasonable time is, as I tried to point out when I wrote about Jean Harris a few months ago, the hot-blooded killer, the one who acted out of passion related to one person, the kind of crime he or she will not repeat. The cold-blooded criminal like Hinckley will, like Hinckley's hero Theodore Bundy, shoot again and again. Bundy, you'll recall, is the one who specialized in murdering young girls. Hinckley has been corresponding with him....

Colorado is the site of two of the government's most conspicuous white elephants.

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One is the Shuttle Operation and Planning Complex near Colorado Springs. It costs $70 million and it is empty. The shuttle business is not, as everyone knows, flourishing, and the Johnson Space Center in Houston can take on any feasible work load. An Air Force officer says of the building, "Other potential uses are under review." In southwestern Colorado, the Bureau of Reclamation has spent $450 million on the Dolores River Project, which was intended to irrigate 62,000 acres of nearby crop land so that the amount of wheat, hay, and beans grown there would be tripled.

"On the one hand," writes Mark Obmascik of *The Denver Post*, the Agriculture Department is paying billions of dollars in subsidies so farmers grow less food. On the other hand, the Bureau of Reclamation is forcing farmers to take water that will triple their crop yields."...

A JOB

We soon will have an opening for a reporter-editor. Desirable qualifications include practical experience working in or writing about politics and government. More important are intelligence, humor, and the willingness to work long hours for low pay. Applications should be accompanied by a list of at least three references and by writing samples, not necessarily published but designed to demonstrate fact-gathering and analytical ability.

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY

When James F. Kelly, a senior security inspector for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, discovered incidents of drug and alcohol abuse at the Cooper Nuclear Station in Nebraska, he turned the evidence over to the utility that owned the plant. He gave the material to the utility's district investigator who also was responsible for developing the utility's fitness-for-duty program. Nothing came of the investigation. A year and a half later, the investigator, who was by then manager of the fitness-for-duty program, was arrested for possession of drugs and for being under their influence.

By 1982, according to testimony before a congressional committee, it had become clear that there was a serious nationwide problem of alcohol and drug abuse at nuclear facilities. The NRC proceeded to rush to action at approximately the same pace we have seen demonstrated by the EPA, the FDA, and the FAA. In August 1982 it issued a proposed rule for fitness on duty. In July 1984 it approved publication of the rule—but said the staff should first ask the utility industry if it would prefer to devise its own rules. The industry liked that idea a lot. In August 1986 the commission finally adopted a policy statement on drugs and alcohol. It contained no powers of enforcement....

If you've ever been hassled by the police or the IRS, you may take some delight in an incident that occurred not long ago in Montgomery County, Maryland. An off-duty IRS agent and an off-duty policeman each driving his own car got into an argument at a traffic light. The man from the IRS pulled out his gun and said "I'm a federal agent." The cop pulled out his police badge and told the IRS man to "hold it." The IRS man, instead, made a U-turn and sped away. He went directly to the police station where he lodged a complaint against the officer. The officer arrived soon thereafter and grabbed the IRS agent by the shirt and began banging his head against a wall. Both men were arrested....

Have you noticed the fingernails of your Yuppie female friends? They are almost all carefully manicured. (Indeed I am told that these women often pay as much as $30 per nail for reconstruction to create that perfect look.) Is it possible that like the Chinese mandarins who used their long nails to communicate that they were above manual labor, these American women are telling the world that they are above housework? If so, since most men have advanced degrees in the art of housework evasion, who is going to wash the dishes? It is like the mutual failure to nurture I discussed in the June issue. Nobody wants to be mom....

—*Charles Peters*

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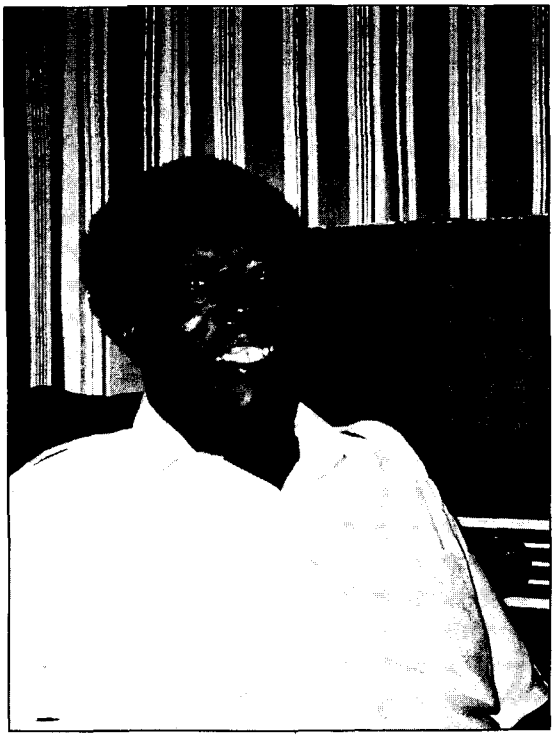

Getting rich
by housing the needy

How THE HOMELESS BOUGHT A ROLLS FOR CORNELIUS PITTS

by Marianne Szegedy-Maszak

It is a typical 90-degrees-and-humid June day in Washington D.C. and Cornelius Pitts is an hour late. He bursts into the front office at the Pitts Motor Hotel, apologizes, then sits down in a maroon leather chair behind a large desk with lion-head drawer handles. A plastic plaque on his desk reads: "The trouble with some people is that they won't admit their faults. I'd admit mine...if I had any." Pitts asks one of his staff to get him an ice cream sandwich. Maybe two. He is a very big man and his voice is deep and raspy. On one hand he wears a large diamond on a gold band, on the other, three slightly smaller diamonds on a silver band. He wears a very, very thin gold watch.

The only hints that Pitts's prosperity comes from an unconventional enterprise are the images on small black and white monitors in the corners of his office. They show what was once the hotel's luxurious Red Carpet Lounge slowly filling up with his newest—and most lucrative—clients, homeless families getting their chicken dinner.

The homeless have been good to Pitts. If the city of Washington D.C. hadn't given him its sole-source contract for providing emergency shelter for homeless families in 1982, he might never have achieved what he calls his "100 percent occupancy" rate. He and his wife would probably not have made $245,000 in salaries, benefits, and profits from the contract last year. And if the city hadn't renewed his multi-million-dollar contract each year—even after mounting evidence of fiscal irregularities—he might never have been able to build all those additions on his upper Northwest Washington home, which is now assessed at $399,562. Or buy his five cars, particularly the $61,000 Mercedes 560 SEL and the $117,500 1987 Rolls Royce Silver Spur. (Both cars have three-digit license plate numbers, a sign of access to the top city officials who dispense them.) Indeed, without the contract, Pitts might have lost his hotel.

Pitts doesn't understand why people have been critical of his business practices. He says he runs a class place, that his hotel at 14th and Belmont is as fine a shelter for the homeless as anyone could find anywhere. And if he makes a good profit, well, that's nobody's business. He is not, he points out, one of those nonprofits. His business, he says, emphasizing each syllable, is "a pro-fit-mak-ing-en-ter-prise."

Rooms at the top

Living off government contracts was not the dream Cornelius C. Pitts brought with him when

Marianne Szegedy-Maszak is a Washington, D.C. writer.

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he came to Washington from New Orleans during World War II. At first, he worked as a clerk-typist for the War Department and moonlighted as a cab driver, saving his money for something bigger. He wanted to be successful in a white man's world. "I was determined to break through the color barrier," he said in 1968. "I was born into business. My mother and father ran a mom-and-pop grocery store in New Orleans."

In 1950 he made the leap, buying his first building on Belmont Street, then a middle-class black residential neighborhood. He converted his new property into a tourist home for blacks, who were not welcome in downtown hotels. Nine years later he bought another building on Belmont. Meanwhile, like the immigrant hero in a thousand American success stories, he went to college, and in 1964, at the age of 41, he graduated with a degree in business administration from Howard University. The next year he bought three more buildings on Belmont Street, then tore down all his buildings and constructed the Pitts Motor Hotel.

In the sixties, the Pitts Hotel was a showplace, and Cornelius Pitts was one of Washington's most successful black entrepreneurs. His hotel attracted not only tourists and traveling businessmen but local customers, black and white. They lined up at the Red Carpet Lounge—which featured valet parking and a maitre d'—to listen to the likes of Aretha Franklin. "The place stayed packed," a former regular said. "The drinks weren't that high. You didn't feel like you were getting ripped off. The music was great. And the minute you walked in, you felt comfortable there."

Pitts viewed himself as having a definite role to play in his community. "Whenever he could, he did something for the neighborhood," says Leroy Hubbard, a local civic leader and long-time friend of Pitts. "He would donate food and space for neighborhood functions, sponsor kids in camps. He trained some summer youth employees in hotel work. He was what they called a progressive businessman." Calvin T. Rolark, president and founder of the United Black Fund, publisher of the weekly community newspaper, *The Washington Informer*, and a close friend of Cornelius Pitts since the early fifties, agrees: "He always offered lots of employment to the black community. He definitely shared his income with numerous blacks. There have been many times I called on Pitts to help out a family and he did it, only asking that we keep his help anonymous."

Pitts achieved his success in the face of the same racism any black entrepreneur of his generation experienced. Back in 1961, for instance, two white police officers from the department's morals squad tried to have Pitts's tourist home license revoked on the grounds that two women had been arrested there the previous year. Businessmen rallied to Pitts's defense. The D.C. Chamber of Commerce pointed out that the incident seemed to be part of "a pattern of questionable police tactics which are directed principally toward Negro establishments with integrated clientele." Pitts's efforts to expand his business were frustrated by the reluctance of banks to give loans to blacks. "I've seen white men get bank loans in this neighborhood," he said in 1968, while he was forced to pay "as much as a dollar for a dollar in interest. The only bank that really helped me was the Industrial Bank of Washington, a black bank."

As one of Washington's premier black businessmen, Pitts naturally drifted into the orbit of prominent black political figures. A month before his 1968 assassination, Martin Luther King rented 30 rooms at the Pitts for a board meeting of the Southern Leadership Conference. That same year Ralph Abernathy and other members of the Poor People's Campaign stayed at the hotel during their march on Washington.

Cornelius Pitts's slide from the top began with the assassination of King. News of the killing triggered rioting, and what had been a vibrant shopping district near the Pitts became a gloomy mass of burned-out buildings. "Location-wise he was beat," says Leroy Hubbard. "He was considered one of the more successful businessmen during that time, but after the riots things went downhill. The street deteriorated." Most businessmen whose stores were not destroyed quickly moved to other neighborhoods.

Pitts is still admired by many of the city's black leaders for remaining loyal to his neighborhood. But the neighborhood never rebounded, and Pitts never again made the profit he had enjoyed catering to middle-class customers. Ironically for Pitts, the effects of the neighborhood devastation were heightened by the success of the civil rights movement. After the riots, blacks who formerly had no alternative but to stay at the Pitts Hotel increasingly were allowed into the white hotels downtown.

Pitts's respectable clients were replaced by prostitutes and junkies. Within months of the riots, he could no longer keep up his $4,064-per-month payments on a Small Business Administration loan. As a spokesman for the D.C. Alliance of Active Black Businessmen, he pushed for city assistance to revitalize the battered neighborhoods, but little help came. By 1981,

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The homeless contract has enabled Cornelius Pitts to buy five cars including a $61,000 Mercedes 560 SEL and a $117,500 Rolls Royce Silver Spur. "I should get more," he says. "I feel I have earned the right to drive the kind of car I can afford to buy and live in the kind of home I can afford to live in."

Pitts owed more than $415,000 in back federal and city taxes and his hold on the Pitts Motor Hotel was weak.

Suite deal

Most cities were unprepared for the crisis of homelessness that erupted in the eighties. The combination of slashed federal low-income housing support, deinstitutionalization of mental patients, neighborhood gentrification, and hard economic times for poorer Americans created a homeless population that by 1985 was increasing by 25 percent a year, according to the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Within that population, homeless families comprise the fastest growing group. It was not clear whether federal funds available for emergency sheltering of the homeless could be used to build shelters or to create more permanent housing stock. As a result, many cities turned to an obvious expedient: hotels.

In Washington, officials turned to Cornelius Pitts. For a number of years he had occasionally sheltered homeless families for the District. Renting a few rooms to the homeless, he explained in 1969, was good business, especially "during the hard winter season." By 1982, the District needed more than a few rooms. It needed an entire facility devoted to homeless families and an "intake center" to centralize the Department of Human Services (DHS) processing. DHS asked for bids on a contract; Pitts submitted his and won. The price: $1.3 million. Soon, though, the Pitts was overflowing, and DHS began placing families in other hotels. But the Pitts remained the only intake center and the only hotel with a fixed-price contract.

There were some who doubted the wisdom of choosing the Pitts. After the 1982 contract was announced, *The Washington Post* reported that police had made 17 arrests at the Pitts in the previous 14 months for crimes such as drug possession and assault with a deadly weapon. "I would question the judgment of that decision [to move families into the hotel]," a D.C. narcotics sergeant told the *Post*; "It's right off 14th Street...drugs and prostitution are in that area." It also seemed odd that such a contract would go to someone who was paying off $415,000 in back taxes.

City officials, however, say they had little choice in the matter. "Back when we first made the award, we felt our backs were really against the walls," explains Robert Allison, deputy controller of DHS. "We asked the program people what to do and they said there was nowhere else to put them." That is not entirely true. Pitts had competed for his contract against two other bidders: the House of Ruth, an emergency shelter for women and children, and the 10th Street Baptist Church. Pitts won even though, as the *Post* reported at the time, the House of Ruth's proposal was lower than Pitts's.

The person least troubled by the contract award was, of course, Cornelius Pitts. "The contract was an absolute must for me," Pitts explained when the award was announced. "I just don't know how I would have been able to make it without it."

Pitts says he is proud that today, after more than five years as a home to the homeless, the Pitts Motor Hotel is again a showcase, much like it was in the sixties. "This is the best temporary shelter for homeless families in the city. There is no shelter in this city that is as fully equipped," he says. "I don't cut corners." In the staff area behind the thick bullet-proof window are several computer systems with the latest software. His hotel offers a completely renovated kitchen that the chef claims "is more well-equipped than any of those kitchens downtown." There is a small store, a first-class security system with monitors scattered throughout the building, and a video

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system that can feed any one of the more than 90 movies in the Pitts video library into each room.

The public areas of the hotel are relatively clean and cheerfully painted. The restaurant still has some of the panache of the Red Carpet days, though there is no red carpet over the white linoleum floor. A children's playroom is decorated with children's drawings of houses with bright roofs, curlicues of smoke, and single shade trees.

But the rooms where homeless families live are not so well maintained. A city inspection report of the hotel from last February repeatedly cited loose plaster, leaks, lack of ventilation, holes in the walls and floors, rooms infested with roaches, bedbugs, and other insects, an inoperable fire alarm system, and broken lights.

Although the Pitts contract specifies no more than four persons in each room, Angela Robertson says her family of six was crammed into one room. She shared a bed with her two youngest sons, her two older sons slept together, and her daughter slept on a roll-away cot. The room, she says, was infested with roaches and rats. A current resident, who was sitting with a crowd on the front steps, was reluctant to describe what it was like to live there because "it causes trouble." She turned her head and shook it saying, "I can't..." Then she said quickly, "It's hell."

Booked up

For providing his first-class accommodations to the city's homeless families, Pitts has been guaranteed full occupancy; from 1982 to 1986, the city renewed his contract without bothering to seek other bidders. Two DHS internal memos from 1984 and 1986, which were leaked to the press, and a publicly released 1986 audit of the Pitts contract by city auditor Otis Troupe reveal where the millions were spent.

The 1984 memo says that Pitts was overcharging the city by one-third for the meals he provided his residents. Yet rather than demand that Pitts cut his prices, the city increased his volume: the following year, DHS began busing homeless housed in other shelters to the Pitts three times a day for meals. This extremely inefficient way of feeding people grossed Pitts more than a million extra dollars that year. DHS dropped the new system after the 1986 audit called it, and Pitts's meal prices, "diseconomical and excessive."

The audit also disclosed that Pitts had been charging $97.07 per square foot for the office space used by DHS officials. By comparison, the audit pointed out, DHS leased space at 1875 Connecticut Avenue, a more desirable location, for $15 a square foot. Indeed, the best office suites in Washington's fancy new Harbor Place now lease for $42 a square foot. When questioned about this, Pitts launched into a long, convoluted monologue about the Economy Act of 1932 and the critical distinction between "raw space" and what he provides. DHS Deputy Controller Robert Allison, who wrote the 1986 memo, puts the overcharge at about $280,000. "We sent Pitts a letter asking for back space rental," says Allison. "I doubt we will get it."

The documents reveal dozens of other overcharges. Pitts's salary was too high—twice what DHS paid the administrators of the city's two largest nursing homes. Pitts charged the city $10,400 for damages, even though damages were already covered elsewhere in the contract. Pitts didn't keep track of furnishings, equipment, or household items purchased with DHS funds. When asked about such complaints, Pitts bristles. "We had a fixed price contract with the city. If we found that our expenses exceeded our income, we had to eat the expenses. Conversely, if we made an adequate profit, the government had nothing to do with the way we spend it." The government, however, paid Pitts $21,677 a year for three years to have CPAs do independent audits of his books. Pitts took the money but somehow never got around to commissioning the audits.

In total, the auditor concluded, the city's contract with Pitts was "sufficiently egregious and exploitative of the taxpayers' interest as to allow only a conclusion that the Agency was grossly derelict in its responsibility to guard the taxpayers' resources." Says Allison: "The guy was simply making too much money off the homeless."

"The fruits of my labor"

Those who work with the homeless recognize the absurdity of sheltering homeless families in hotels like the Pitts. At $42 a night, plus $12 per person per day for meals, the government is paying almost as much per month to keep a family at the Pitts as it would cost to put them in public housing for a year. But with so little public housing available, families are kept at the Pitts for months on end. If this is frustrating for independent-minded families eager to get into their own apartments, it's even worse for those suffering from welfare dependency. "Putting

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families in these hotel shelters is unconscionable," says Reverend Tom Nees, who runs a 15-apartment nonprofit facility for homeless families called Community of Hope. "As desperate as some are to get out, others, sad to say, get hooked on it." Even Ricardo Lyles, chief of D.C.'s office of Shelter and Emergency Services, agrees: "It's not the ideal for a family to live in a hotel. A family should be in an apartment."

Other cities have learned to be "creative" with their federal emergency funds, using them to rehab apartments into which shelter residents can be moved. Washington, D.C. has been a slow learner, even though it has working alternatives as models.

The Community of Hope is just down the street from the Pitts. Its contract with the city is to provide "transitional," or medium-term, shelter for homeless families. The long stays at the Pitts—an "emergency," or short-term, shelter—make the distinction largely theoretical. There are differences, though. A homeless woman familiar with both the Community of Hope and the Pitts put it simply: "The difference between those two places is the difference between heaven and hell." A Community of Hope apartment is not only more livable than a room at the Pitts, it's also much less expensive. A month's room and board at the Pitts for a family of four costs the government $2,748. A month's rent for a Community of Hope apartment, where families have their own kitchens, costs $500. "We've been pressing the city for over a year to expand our contract," said Nees, "I told them the worst it could do is save you money. But we just haven't gotten anywhere."

According to Pitts, those who complain that the city has ignored better options are blind to the greatest virtue of his program: his program is necessarily the best because it is run by blacks. "98 percent of the recipients of services are black people. These are my people," he says. "It is difficult for a white business person to care for my people. But as a black business person, I am doing a better job." When asked about the Community of Hope program down the street, he responds, "It's nothing personal. I just don't believe that any white person can be as interested in the welfare of poor black people as a black person."

The issues of race and class inform Pitts's judgments. He explains that his neighborhood and business went into decline after the riots because "after Dr. King was shot, the whites left and they have yet to return" and because *The Washington Post* "kept writing about what a high crime area this was and never retracted it. What makes an area safe is people; when the press makes people scared, people stay away." He also blames his middle-class black clientele, who stayed away and starved his business. "Poor blacks have always supported black businesses. It is the middle-class blacks we have always had problems with. Maybe it is because we compete socially with each other and we don't want to give each other an edge. We meet up at parties and discuss the type of car you drive and the type of home you have."

He says critics of his program are racists or are swallowing a clever strategy of white real-estate developers. "Whites who have moved into this area are whites who want to build expensive condominiums on Belmont Street," he says. "They want to buy my property. I refuse to sell. So they try to discredit me so that the D.C. government would withdraw my contract."

Ask Pitts's many friends in Washington's black power elite about the criticisms of his program and the answers are almost always the same: white racism and not gross mismanagement of a public poverty program, is behind the complaints. "I don't know why the man is criticized," says an indignant Calvin T. Rolark of the United Black Fund. "Racism is still sticking its ugly head up. Some people, some white people, are not desirous of blacks achieving anything. They think, if they achieve it, they have to steal it."

Pitts works to keep support like that. When he still owed hundreds of thousands of dollars in back taxes, his hotel managed to come up with $2,000 for Mayor Marion Barry's 1982 reelection campaign—a few months before the DHS contract was awarded. Leroy Hubbard explains that this is a skill Pitts had to learn. "Sometimes he would catch the mayor's ear at special events. He wasn't very political before; now he is at every special event. He is very supportive politically and he will support the existing politicians."

The television monitors in Pitts's office show the staff clearing the tables. A number of homeless families have moved to the hotel's front stoop where they will sit talking until the 11 o'clock curfew. Pitts wades through the children eating fudgesicles and the women sipping Orange Crush on his way to his Rolls Royce. Their eyes follow him and conversation stops. "I have been in business for 37 years," Pitts says. "I feel I have earned the right to drive the kind of car I can afford to buy and live in the kind of home I can afford to live in. If I will ever enjoy the fruits of my labor, I should enjoy them in this life." ■

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WHO'S WHO

Fawn Hall knows a lot more than she told Congress, our national security sources say. She wasn't just a secretary, she was more like an administrative assistant to **Oliver North** and knew practically everything he did. Even if North hadn't intended to tell her all, he talks so much, and they were together so much—often for 10 to 12 hours a day—that it was inevitable she would have become aware of what he was doing.

Robert McFarlane is another who is said to know more than he revealed. He was North's principal sponsor. Until McFarlane took over the NSC advisor's position, North was working on low level or nonessential matters—one example that is classified but that insiders will recognize as definitely not on the front burner was called "continuity of government." McFarlane, whose secretary was **Wilma Hall**, Fawn Hall's mother, by the way, used to talk to North about starting a business together. The Iran-contra operation thus gave the two of them a chance to make connections and practice their future joint venture in the private sector. . . . .

There is a fear among some of the Iran-contra committee investigative staff that the probe will be terminated too quickly because **Arthur Liman**, the chief counsel of the Senate panel, wants to return to his private law practice. The danger is that key underlings of the Hugh Sloan and Alexander Butterfield type will not be called as witnesses. If such people had not testified during Watergate, half the story would have remained unknown.

If the joint committee doesn't bring out the whole story, it now seems unlikely that the press will do so. Most of the media bigshots, instead of being out on the street digging, have been sitting in the hearing room. . . .

Alan Greenspan's appointment as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board was ushered through the White House by the president's two **Bakers, Howard** and **James.** Among those not consulted were **James Miller**, the head of OMB, **Beryl Sprinkel**, the chairman of the council of economic advisors, and Vice President **Bush**.

For all the grief the administration is willing to take on his behalf, **William Bradford Reynolds** must be terribly useful. After failing to win confirmation as deputy attorney general, he has now been elevated to an equally influential post, counselor to the attorney general, a position that does not require Senate confirmation. This set off quite a storm at a meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Senator **Joseph Biden**, the chairman of the committee, doing what he likes to do best, expressed outrage. "What the attorney general is doing is what he has made a career of doing and that is to obviate the actions that the Congress, the Senate, and this committee in particular has taken—I am quite frankly offended." Senator **Edward Kennedy** was next, joining the debate in his own garbled way. "I think what the attorney general has done is try and do administratively that which he was unable to do from the legal point of view." By this time Republican Senator **Alan Simpson** had had enough. "I'm a little surprised that this would have been brought up. It is really a question of politics and nothing more, it is not propriety, it is not ability." Simpson went on to suggest a solution to the Democrats: "There is a way to handle this. You elect a new president." Then, referring to the fact that it took more than a year for the committee to confirm Meese (and getting a little carried away), Simpson said, "[Meese] will never pass your test. . . . He was held hostage longer than the people in Iran. . . snares were laid for him in this committee long ago, but his pelt is not yet on the wall. . . . Let's not elevate this issue to the high plain of principle when it is just plain stuff. It is old Ed Meese again, the ornery fink and Brad Reynolds the fink-fink. Why don't we just get on with our business.". . .

Two interesting facts: Out of 53 staff directors or chief counsels to congressional committees, all of which are appointed by Democrats, only five are women. Out of 507 political jobs the Reagan administration has to offer, 79 are unfilled. The most notable empty chair is the director of the FBI. Several prominent people, including former Pennsylvania Governor **Richard Thornburg**, have been offered the job, but there have been no takers. Since the FBI falls officially under the direction of the Justice Department, it may be that no one wants to work for Ed Meese. . . .

In— *White House* Special Assistant to the President for Political and Intergovernmental Affairs—**Lisa Stoltenberg**. Deputy Director, Office of Political Affairs—**Carlyle Gregory Jr**. *Federal Reserve Board* Chairman—**Alan Greenspan** has been president of Townsend, Greenspan, and Co. *Securities and Exchange Commission* Chairman—**David S. Ruder** was dean of Northwestern University School of Law. *Agriculture* Assistant Secretary for Economics—**Ewen M. Wilson**. *NASA* Inspector General—**June Brown**. *Health and Human Services* Assistant Secretary for Human Development—**Jean Elder**. *Labor* Assistant Secretary for Mine Safety and Health—**Dorothy Strunk**. *State* Ambassador to Saudi Arabia—**Hume Horan**.

Out— *White House* Deputy Press Secretary—**Albert Brashear**. *Agriculture* Undersecretary for Int. Affairs and Commodity Programs—**Daniel Amstutz**. Assistant Secretary for Economics—**Robert L. Thompson**. *Defense* Undersecretary of Navy—**James F. Goodrich**. *Energy* Assistant Secretary for Defense Programs—**Admiral Sylvester R. Foley**. Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy—**David Rossin**. *Interior* Director of Bureau of Mines—**Robert Horton**. *Justice* Assistant Attorney General for land and Natural Resources—**F. Henry Habicht, II**.

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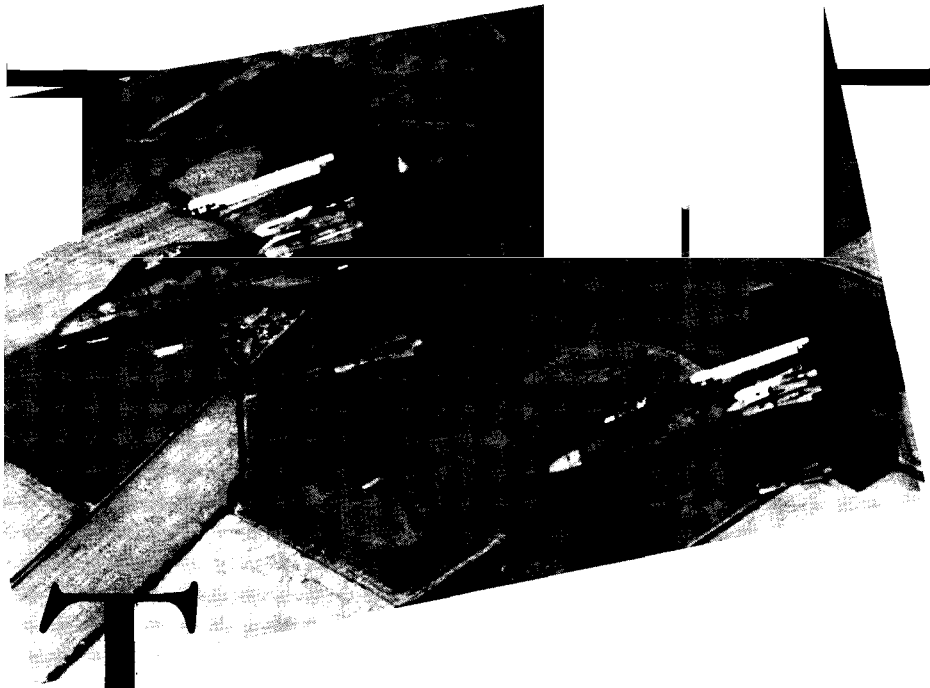
by Robert Coram



After 40 years of wrong choices and petty bickering, the Air Force is about to drop its biggest bomb ever.

THE CASE AGAINST THE AIR FORCE

In September, the United States Air Force will mark its 40th anniversary with a celebration so spectacularly flattering to itself that *Top Gun* will seem an antiwar film by comparison. All around the world bands will play, jets will zoom through the skies, and generals will make speeches about the sky service's many contributions to free world defense. But while the public is watching the air show, Air Force leaders inside the Pentagon will use their moment to push plans for one of the most questionable initiatives in postwar military annals—converting billions of dollars worth of frontline fighter planes into planes designed to deliver smart bombs behind enemy lines. All at the expense of providing close-air support to U.S. troops in battle.

This initiative, which has no formal name but may be referred to by its nickname, "deep strike," comprises perhaps the most important and far-reaching conventional weapons procurement decisions Congress will be asked to make in 1987. Because the subject is tangled and involves the kind of institutional cross-purposes for which no individual can be singled out as the villain, deep strike is hardly ever mentioned in the press or on Capitol Hill. Yet it is the ultimate expression of a jurisdictional feud that has been simmering within the U.S. military since the airplane was invented. It is not necessary to go back in history, however, to find a warning that deep strike may be a huge waste of money: April 15, 1986, will do.

That was the day nine of the Air Force's most sophisticated strike aircraft, armed with the best smart bombs, tried to kill Muammar Qaddafi as part of the Libya raid. Qaddafi is still alive. The lasers and high-tech target sensors on four of the FB111s broke down, causing the planes to turn back without releasing their weapons. None of the five planes that did deliver scored a direct hit. This was not the pilots' fault; scoring direct hits on small targets from fast-moving airplanes is almost impossible. But this modest technical display, instead of giving pause to Pentagon leaders and the two armed services committees, has been glossed over as the Air Force presses ahead with deep strike, a program to invest tens of billions of dollars in the technology that struck out against Qaddafi—on the assumption that such technology will demolish Soviet forces offering considerably more resistance than a madman's tent.

From a hardware standpoint, deep strike involves adapting Air Force F15 and F16 fighters into electronics-laden tactical bombers similar to the FB111. The resulting $45 million F15E "Strike

Robert Coram, a contributing editor of Atlanta, *has written extensively on military affairs.*

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Eagles" and $20 million A16s (no nickname yet) would be used primarily to attack targets behind enemy lines. This specialty is vital to the Air Force in its battle against a menacing and determined foe it has been fighting throughout its 40 years—the Army. From an institutional standpoint, the key element of deep strike is the Air Force's desire to avoid having to cooperate with its rival service.

In military lingo, what we attempted to do to Qaddafi was "interdict" him. "Interdiction" means conventional destruction of a precisely chosen point deep in enemy territory. Since the Air Force's creation in 1947, it has maintained that interdiction of targets such as supply depots is the best way to assist troops in combat. The Army has countered that "close-air support" aerial attacks at the battlefront itself are more important. Pentagon debates on this subject go on endlessly. Damage to rear-area targets may cost an opponent dearly. If, for example, interdiction aircraft can destroy a shipment of shells, the opponent may run out of ammunition in a week. On the other hand, close-air attacks at the front drain enemy strength right away, which saves American lives and may determine the outcome of today's battle, not next week's.

Were funds unlimited, a military tactician would want plenty of deep-strike power at his disposal. But even in the Reagan era, defense funds are not unlimited. The great drawback to interdiction is that the price is so high compared to close-air support, and the gains at best speculative compared to the indisputable need to defeat the enemy at the point of battle, that cost-effectiveness is dubious. At about $5 million each, the target sensors for the F15E and A16 alone will cost nearly as much as an entire A10 close-support airplane.

Here is where a ridiculous entanglement arises. Because the Air Force shows little interest in providing close support for troops, the Army is forced to invest undue amounts in attack helicopters, which are both costlier than comparable airplanes ($10 million for the Apache antitank helicopter, versus about $7 million for most A10s) and far more vulnerable to being shot down. At present the Army is ruminating over a new helicopter program called LHX, one more carefully tailored to satisfy committees than to serve on the battlefield. Go-ahead decisions for LHX, A16, and the $5 million sensor (called Lantirn, a compression of "low altitude navigation and infrared system for night") are due soon: procurement of LHX may, over its production life, cost $60 billion—more than the Reagan administration has spent on the B1, the MX, or other programs that have received greater public notice. A little background on these systems suggests alternatives that could both save money and improve the effectiveness of American forces.

Scaring Hitler

The airplane, invented in 1903, was first incorporated into the U.S. military in 1907, with the creation of an Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps. It wasn't until 1947 that the Air Force was made an independent service, the event being commemorated this year.

During World War I, aircraft were primarily infantry tools. Some performed reconnaissance, others were employed to strafe troops; dogfighting developed when one side's airplanes tried to prevent the other's from accomplishing such objectives. Many pilots came away from the Great War suspicious that ground generals, jealous of their franchise, had used aircraft ineptly in order to create a self-fulfilling prophecy that the new flying machines were not significant. Many also came away feeling a bit superior to their less-trained comrades on the ground. Corps elitism wasn't new to the Army, of course; the cavalry traditionally felt that being on horseback made it superior to those on foot. The new flyboys, thousands of feet up above those dying in the trenches, quite literally carried elitism to a new height.

In 1913 an Army lieutenant named Henry H. "Hap" Arnold had written an article for *The Infantry Journal* suggesting that aircraft could be used not just for close support of troops, but for ambitious offensive operations. Eight years later an Italian theorist named Guilio Douhet wrote *The Command of the Air*, the first comprehensive work on air power. Douhet argued that airplanes might render the gruesome trench warfare of World War I obsolete. Cheaper victories might be had by bombing the enemy's industries, destroying the means to fight.

That same year, 1921, Army Captain Billy Mitchell dispatched the first of several "unsinkable" battleships he would send to the bottom in his crusade to demonstrate that flying machines could destroy anything from the air. Like Douhet, Mitchell saw the airplane as a means to make warfare less barbaric. Like most aviators he shared the notion that pilots represented a new, noble order of fighting man, capable of winning wars in a civilized fashion—but only if freed from subservience to the generals of the infantry, whose closed minds led to so much nihilistic slaughter in the trenches. "It is

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Pilot Billy Mitchell captured the attitude of the early pilots when he wrote that "future wars will again be conducted by a special class, the air force, as it was by the armored knights of the Middle Ages."

probable," Mitchell wrote in his book *Winged Defense*, "that future wars will again be conducted by a special class, the air force, as it was by the armored knights of the Middle Ages."

Young officers who saw promise in the airplane met with pronounced institutional resistance from their senior counterparts. Army officers aligned with the service's existing infantry, artillery, and other factions, feared that if fighting aircraft were successful, funds for their fiefdoms would be reduced. So air power advocates of the thirties and early forties focused their energies on an idea that would circumvent the infantry altogether—a long-range bomber capable of striking far from combat. The ideas of Douhet and Mitchell became the foundation of lectures throughout the 1930s at the Air Corps Tactical School. "Critical targets" in the enemy homeland would be assaulted by "strategic bombing." What Arnold called "the independent air mission" would make it all possible. (The phrase "strategic bombing" later fell out of use when strategic acquired special meaning in the nuclear era; "interdiction" replaced it.)

As the outbreak of World War II approached, the bureaucratic tide—which always seemed to run against air power advocates—suddenly shifted in the flyers' favor when Arnold won Franklin Roosevelt's personal endorsement for his theories. Roosevelt had solicited reports on how long it might take the military to prepare for another war in Europe. Some admirals and infantry generals predicted five years or more. Arnold, using unofficial channels, made the case to Roosevelt's advisor, Harry Hopkins, that air power could carry the fight to the German heartland much sooner. And if interdiction worked as promised, sending another American army to the continent might not be necessary.

As Thomas Coffey recounted in his book *Hap*, Arnold, Hopkins, Secretary of War Henry Woodring, and a selection of old-school generals and admirals were called to Roosevelt's office in September, 1938. "Roosevelt began by saying he had read the War Department report on a proposed expansion of the ground and air forces, and he wasn't satisfied. A new Army post in Wyoming would not, in his opinion, scare Adolf Hitler one goddamned bit. What he wanted was airplanes." While the old-schoolers hemmed and hawed, Arnold jumped in with a plan for rapid expansion of aircraft production. Roosevelt approved.

By the time World War II began, the idea of "independent air missions" was established. In both the European and Pacific theatres, the bomber corps fought, for the most part, a private war against cities, factories, and staging bases. Whether or not this represented the best allocation of air resources, it was essential if air power was to acquire the autonomy that would lead to a separate service.

Interservice noncooperation

Interdiction did not have the decisive effect on Germany that backers predicted. Then, as now, most bombs missed what they were aimed at. A bomb missing a factory by as little as 100 feet may do no militarily significant harm; against other targets, even greater accuracy is required. The "destruct radius" of a 500-pound bomb dropped against a tank is today less than 15 feet; only a bull's eye will do the job. During World War II, the accuracy of the best bomber crews, flying low in daylight, was measured not in feet but in thousands of yards. If 100 bombers were assigned to attack an industrial complex, only a few might actually land their bombs on the factory grounds. Surveys conducted after the war concluded that German factories increased their output despite being bombed. (Next time you're in a plane at 30,000 feet, try to pick out a building on the ground and imagine the technical difficulty of releasing a bomb so that it falls through miles of space—buffeted by unpredictable winds; propelled by the momentum of the plane's forward motion—and hits that building alone.)

The sad reality of bombing inaccuracy was driven home in 1945, when U.S. tacticians,

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frustrated by their inability to stage precision destruction of military targets, began sending bombers against cities, which are harder to miss. Yet interdiction was not, as is fashionable for revisionists to assert, morally bankrupt. German factories might not have been shut down, but how much more would they have produced without bombardment? During the early forties, output rose by far higher margins in U.S. factories, a surge that could not have occurred if they, too, had been periodically attacked from the air.

After the Air Force was established in 1947, it ordered its tactical goals as: air superiority, interdiction, close-air support of the Army. From that year to the mid-1970s, the Air Force built many kinds of planes for the first two roles, but neglected to design a single close-support aircraft.

Meanwhile a sort of truce document signed by top military officials in conjunction with the Air Force's creation, effectively barred the Army from operating "fixed wing" combat aircraft. This forced it to invest in "rotary wing aircraft" (helicopters). Even if these aircraft were frighteningly fragile—and during the Vietnam war the Army would lose 4,643 helicopters, all to small-arms fire and visually aimed rocket grenades—at least when an Army field commander called for help, they would come. The Air Force might be preoccupied.

The Korean War was the first war the Air Force fought as an independent service, and in the early months of that conflict, interdiction worked well. But once the North Koreans figured out U.S. bombing tactics, they devised a simple countermeasure: moving their troops and supplies at night. The North Korean military also proved surprisingly adept at rebuilding damaged targets. Highways, rail lines, and bridges were often back in use only hours after being damaged, repaired by masses of laborers with shovels. The Air Force responded with a bookkeeping parry: it redefined interdiction success in terms of tonnage dropped, not targets hit.

In the summer of 1951, the largest interdiction effort ever undertaken was mounted against the seven major highways leading from railheads to the lines of Chinese and North Korean troops. Air Force, Navy, and Marine aircraft flew more than 100,000 sorties, but supplies continued to come through. By the end of the Korean War the Air Force alone had flown some 220,000 interdiction sorties in what was generally considered a failed effort. A 1966 study by the RAND Corporation, the Air Force's own think tank, called the bombing campaign "at best, a limited success."

Worse, from the soldier's standpoint, was that while the Air Force was devoting huge resources to fight behind enemy lines, it was giving short shrift to close air support. During the early days of the Korean War, Marine commanders were allowed to control their own aircraft; response time to a call for help usually ran about 15 minutes. Then the Air Force insisted that all close-support requests be coordinated by a rear echelon hierarchy under its control; the response time rose to 45 minutes.

When the Air Force did attempt to provide close support, results were often poor. The service had designed no planes for this role; instead, the Air Force used its flashy fighters, the F80 and F86. But even the slickest aircraft cannot realistically fly faster than 500 miles per hour during "ordinance delivery," and 300 miles per hour is considered more practical; otherwise it's virtually impossible to spot a ground target or avoid the hills and other obstacles that might bring a low-level mission to an unscheduled conclusion.

Another drawback to high performance aircraft is that they consume fuel more quickly than their mundane cousins. This usually meant they couldn't "loiter"—circle near the battle area—waiting for the precise moment they were needed. Instead they had to be called in from distant airbases and could make only one hell-bent pass before roaring back whence they came. To compensate for the frontline fighters' limitations, the Air Force pressed into service old P51 Mustangs, prop-driven airplanes that had been great successes as World War II fighters but which proved vulnerable to ground fire.

One of the most chilling cases of interservice noncooperation occurred in 1953, when the Air Force virtually abandoned a Marine division at the Chosin Reservoir. Encircled by a much larger force of Chinese, the Marines called for air support. At the time, Air Force commanders wanted to send Marine aircraft off on an interdiction wild goose chase. Only because Marine pilots ignored Air Force controllers by pretending to have radio trouble were they able to help their comrades break out; the Marines have insisted on (and gotten) their own close-support air wing ever since.

Hit and run

The situation proved much the same in Vietnam. The Air Force spared no expense for interdiction, dropping six times the total tonnage it had during World War II with, at best, modest results. High-altitude accuracy improved (there was very little bomb damage in Hanoi proper,

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and civilian casualties were small by the standards of warfare) but fixed industrial or military targets were not obliterated; the Christmas 1972 bombings helped bring about the 1973 truce, but years of attacks on the Ho Chi Minh trail failed to close it.

Meanwhile, close support of troops was neglected. Army helicopter pilots attempted with extraordinary courage to carry out the job, but their aircraft were easy to shoot down. Most Air Force close-support missions in Vietnam were flown by supersonic performance machines like the F104 Phantom and F105 Thunderchief. Because neither could slow down long enough to find friendly troops under the jungle canopy, standard operating procedure was to tell everybody to duck as they roared in to unload a fast blaze of ordinance and then roared off, hoping to reach base before running out of fuel. Again, the Air Force was in the embarrassing position of having to bring a dull-looking prop plane out of retirement for close-support work, in this case, the A1 Skyraider, which first flew in 1946. The A1's top speed was a mere 318 miles per hour, but it could carry lots of ordinance, withstand small arms fire, and stay over a target for long stretches of time. As soon as the Vietnam war ended, the A1 was banished from the inventory.

Errant precision

There are two solutions to the problem of dropping a bomb from 30,000 feet. One is to bring the bomber closer to the ground; this requires sophisticated electronics and exposes the plane to a higher risk of being hit. The other is to add target-seekers and motors to the bomb itself, creating precision guidance. So the Air Force (and other military organizations, U.S. and foreign) has quested after ground sensors and precision-guided munitions, or "smart" bombs.

Bombing radars were tested during World War II, but their resolution was too vague to do much more than ensure that a plane was attacking the right city. A claimed breakthrough debuted on the FB111: terrain-following radar, which scans the ground ahead of an aircraft, generating an image that pilots supposedly can use to avoid hills and obstacles as they fly low behind enemy lines, avoiding detection until the target is at hand.

In tests, terrain-following radar is the cat's meow. But tests are often held over the southwest desert, where hills and obstacles are few, and without opposing fire, so that pilots are never distracted. Early FB111s were shipped to Vietnam, where it soon became clear that if a pilot attempted to practice high-speed terrain following under real conditions, the yin of his plane would achieve oneness with the yang of the ground. The "circular error probable" (CEP, the basic measure of bomb accuracy) of the FB111 was about three-quarters of a mile—better than anything achieved in World War II, but still not good enough to assure a hit on a factory, to say nothing of a tank.

Air Force response to the FB111's inability to deliver its advertised accuracy was not to question interdiction theory, but to withdraw the aircraft from Vietnam, thus cutting off the flow of embarrassing statistics. More funds then went to the same technology; the primary attack sensor of the B1B is also a terrain-following radar—new and improved, of course. When the bomber first went into service, pilots were forbidden to use the system at night, because copilots couldn't watch out the window to see if the electronics were right. Now, the Air Force has assured Congress, everything's fine.

The Air Force also experimented with various smart bombs. One such weapon much touted during the seventies, the television Maverick missile, turned out to be a legendary dud. TV Mavericks, designed to destroy tanks and break fortifications, have cameras in their noses. A screen in the cockpit allows pilots to see what the missile sees and supposedly steer the weapon to a direct hit. But in order to concentrate on guiding a television Maverick, a pilot must fly his plane straight and level, with no evasive maneuvers. In demonstrations for congressional delegations this is no problem; in combat it is suicide. The latest version guides itself, using a sensor designed to identify a tank's radiant heat. This is a clear step forward for pilot life expectancies, but accuracy of the new version appears only so-so, and the launching aircraft must still fly straight for an uncomfortably long time as the pilot locks the missile on its target.

Against Qaddafi, the Air Force employed another kind of smart bomb, one with laser seekers. Because laser light does not occur in nature, its reflection is distinctive and easy for sensors to track. FB111s are two-man aircraft; during the approach to Qaddafi's compound, the pilot flew the plane while a weapons officer looked for the quarry through a night-sight called a Flir ("forward-looking infrared"). These sensors are remarkably effective at rendering dark areas visible; but at best they enable a smart weapon to achieve the same accuracy it would during the day, which isn't necessarily sufficient. The FB111s were moving at their slowest speed,

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500 miles per hour or 833 feet per second. At that speed a two-second pause equates to a quarter-mile delivery error; a pocket of turbulence can knock a bomb off course.

Once Qaddafi's compound was spotted, the weapons officer shined a laser "designator" on it and launched bombs. As the pilot veered the plane away, the weapons officer had to hold the swivel-mounted laser projector trained on the target. (The Army's Apache antitank helicopter also works on the laser designation principle, except that it may hover while the weapons officer guides the missile. Recent war games indicated that when Apaches hover to operate their missiles, even the main guns of tanks, normally useless as antiaircraft weapons, could shoot them down.) If the laser-designator stays trained on the target, a bull's eye is likely. If the weapons officer can't hold it there, or if the aircraft must juke to evade antiaircraft fire, the smart bombs revert to dumb.

Several of the "precision guided" warheads delivered against Qaddafi fell far wide of the mark; one landed two miles distant, killing about 100 civilians. Considering that Qaddafi's compound was lightly defended by Warsaw Pact standards, that preparation for the raid had lasted months, and that the exact configuration of the compound had been mapped out far in advance—an advantage rarely available in combat—this mediocre performance should cast great doubt on plans for a major commitment to deep-strike hardware. Air Force officers who briefed the White House on the Libya plan had confidently predicted a .95 "PK"—probability of kill.

Protocol offenses

There was one break in the modern Air Force obsession with interdiction. When Melvin Laird was Secretary of Defense during the first half of the Nixon Administration, he threatened to award the Air Force's close-support "roles and missions" statement to the Army unless a close-support aircraft was built. When its budget was threatened, the Air Force jumped: the result was the A10, a relatively simple and low-cost antitank aircraft.

The A10 and most close-support aircraft designed by other nations are cheap primarily because they are subsonic. While the A10 can deliver precision guided munitions such as the Maverick, its primary weapon is a big cannon that fires armor-piercing shells. This cannon is also cheap; about $200 per burst, compared to about $170,000 for the new self-guiding Maverick and about $362,000 for the latest version of the Libya laser bomb. The cannon possesses an important advantage over smart bombs—because it sprays a broad area, it need not be precisely aimed. There's no elaborate "lock-on" sequence; when strafing tanks, A10s fly straight and level for only a few seconds. Considering that none of the air-to-ground antitank weaponry developed by the U.S. in the last decade has actually been used in combat, no one really knows what works, but in training exercises the cheap A10 gun has generally done better than the expensive smart bombs.

But just because the Air Force built the A10 didn't mean the flyboys liked it. Being subsonic and sluggish-looking (no swept wings!), close-support aircraft do not fit the service's wild-blue-yonder image. Being inexpensive, the A10 made it hard to justify other Air Force models at budget time. Worst, A10 operation would not be practical without coordinated Army-Air Force planning and "JAATs," Joint Aerial Attack Training in which Air Force pilots and Army helicopter drivers trained side by side. There was also the FAC factor. Because the topography of battle changes (in contrast to targets like Qaddafi's compound, which are stationary), aircraft operating at the front need help from forward air controllers (FACs). When infantry FACs do the controlling, Army corporals and sergeants radio commands to Air Force pilots who are captains and majors. This is an extreme protocol offense.

From the moment A10s arrived in the inventory, the Air Force fished for reasons to substitute more expensive, higher-tech strike aircraft. When asked at congressional hearings for places their budget might be cut, blue generals would always cheerfully suggest the A10 program. Asked why, they would explain that the A10 wasn't "all weather"—the cannon must be visually aimed, ruling out use during storms.

"All weather" ground-attack systems are a chimera engineers have been attempting to breed for decades. The idea that weapons must be smart enough to function in bad weather skims past the complication that even the best modern aircraft often can't fly when the weather is bad. It also ignores the fact that if a smart weapon has only so-so accuracy under ideal conditions, performance is unlikely to improve in cloud banks. But all-weather attack is an advanced technological objective, profitable for contractors and enticing to those congressmen whose favorite words about procurement are "gee whiz." Far more money has been spent pursuing this elusive

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The ability to attack targets behind enemy lines is a specialty vital to the Air Force in its battle against a menacing and determined foe it has been fighting throughout its 40 years—the Army.

goal than on improving practical systems that will suit most, though not all, conditions.

The Air Force saw its escape from close-support work when the latest super-sensor, Lantirn, was proposed. Lantirn consists of two "pods" resembling torpedoes, slung under Strike Eagles and A16s. One pod holds navigation equipment for the pilot to use as he roars along 100 feet above the ground at midnight in the rain; its main component is terrain-following radar. The other pod contains targeting aids for smart bombs, including laser designators and a "millimeter wave" radar with very high resolution.

The only thing that protects Lantirn from the kind of scrutiny directed against other procurement boondoggles is that, like the late, lamented Divad gun, it's so complicated nobody understands what it's supposed to do—so nobody can tell if it's working. Lantirn's $5 million cost is almost comical. Performance has been questionable. And so far, Lantirn tests, according to the Pentagon's office of Operational Tests and Evaluation, have not "even minimally...reflect[ed] the stress of combat environments."

Of course, many complicated machines perform poorly at first. A good rule of thumb for evaluating procurement projects is to ask whether they will represent sensible investments of defense dollars—assuming the wrinkles can be ironed out. Military insiders feel that if Lantirn can be debugged, it will lower CEPs for the new Strike Eagles and A16s to a few hundred feet. This will be an improvement over any interdiction aircraft in the world today, but that doesn't necessarily justify its cost.

Among other things, so much weight on Strike Eagles and A16s will be taken up by Lantirn pods and extra fuel tanks that the airplanes will carry only a limited amount of ordinance—so that if they do succeed in reaching and hitting an "interdiction" target, they may not have enough punch to wipe it out. Shortcomings like this are found in all forms of wonder weaponry. But when the price of these deep strike airplanes is factored into the relatively small amount of damage they might inflict assuming they work, and the damage to us if our limited number of these aircraft are shot down during interdiction raids (as one of the 18 FB111s was during the 10-minute Libya action), the exercise starts to become nutty. Its numerous mechanical breakdowns aside, Divad never passed the "is it sensible?" test. Lantirn—an expensive system to guide expensive aircraft into position to miss targets of secondary significance—doesn't either.

But Lantirn was irresistible to Air Force generals. Their beloved F15, which the public perceives as futuristic but which actually entered production before Molly Ringwald entered grade school, was nearing the end of its planned acquisition run. A strike version sporting Lantirn and smart bombs might keep the plane in production with its state-of-the-art credentials renewed. Better still, the Strike Eagle would be so expensive that only a few could be afforded—42 are in the Pentagon's fiscal 1988 budget request. That would give the Air Force an excuse to reserve the planes for "independent air missions" far removed from Army battles.

Strike Eagle came first. Then about a year ago, when funding for a new close-support aircraft began to be discussed, Air Force planners unveiled the related idea of adapting F16s for battlefield work. Using the service's two frontline fighters as the next generation of ground-attack planes would ensure that no more low-tech planes like the A10 snuck into the Air Force inventory.

In theory, an A16 version of the F16 would be capable of providing close support for troops; for instance, it would have provisions for mounting a compact version of the A10 antitank cannon. But to keep acceleration and maneuverability high, fighter planes have thin, metallic skins to keep weight low. Up high in the sky, this makes sense: during air-to-air combat a fighter generally either receives a fatal blow or escapes unscathed. Down close to the ground, thin skins are nonsense.

Near the battle lines, all manner of weapons are going off. Aircraft-attacking tanks may be fired back at by dozens of cannons, machine guns, and rifles, in addition to a variety of

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missiles. Under such conditions hits are almost inevitable. For this reason the A10 and the comparable Soviet Sukoi 25 are "armored" aircraft. They have thick skins that deflect bullets and small cannon rounds, special shields surrounding the pilot, internal fire extinguishers, and other combat survival features.

An attack plane based on the thin-skinned F16 would be torn up by simple machine gun fire. Strike Eagles also have fighter-thin skin. The Air Force doesn't even pretend that these $45 million investments will be gambled against $1 million tanks. *Aviation Week*, the *Pravda* of the defense industry, recently noted, "Senior officers from both services believe that A16s will be capable of performing [close air support], but junior officers see the aircraft as less capable than the A10 in this role and more suited to interdiction." Translated, that means the deskbound brass in Washington, whose next career move will be early retirement to a soft job with a contractor, believe, as usual, that no cost is too high and no plan too complex; field-grade officers, whose next career move could be putting their backsides on the line in combat, want weapons that work. Guess who usually prevails.

If it wins congressional approval for A16s and more Strike Eagles, the Air Force will have accomplished a bureaucratic coup: preserving the funds that flow through its close-support "role," but using those funds for other purposes. The Army, unfortunately, has a perverse incentive to play along. Air Force refusal to provide effective battlefield support is the mud service's best argument for keeping alive funding for Apache and the LHX.

Sense and sensibilities

What are the alternatives?

First, the silly restrictions against Army operation of airplanes should be lifted. The Air Force may not care about battle support but the Army surely does. Letting Army planners address this problem by whatever means works best instead of restricting them to helicopters is the essence of the "is it sensible?" approach. Freed of the close-support role it dislikes, the Air Force could concentrate on air-superiority and strategic operations, which it's good at. Freed of the ban against "fixed wing" aircraft, the Army might slowly wean itself from overreliance on vulnerable attack helicopters.

Second, the approximately 700 existing A10s ought to be repainted green and turned over to the Army. Defense equipment belongs to the public, not to individual services; it should be sent where it serves the public best.

Third, a new close-support airplane, similar to the A10 but smaller and more maneuverable, should be built instead of the A16 and LHX. Such a plane would address the drawbacks of the A10—it's awfully big, presenting ground gunners with a large target, and has trouble with certain types of evasive maneuvers. The A10 is big mainly to accommodate its antitank cannon, the chambering mechanism of which is the size of a small car. After A10 production began, tests showed that operating the cannon at about half the maximum rate was just as effective as full blast, allowing compact versions of the cannon to be built and making a small aircraft possible.

Building a new A10-style aircraft has been endorsed by the Air National Guard and many military scientists, in addition to a few underground factions within the Air Force and Army. It should also be backed by the Marines, who currently are buying expensive Harrier jump-jets for close-support work.

These sorts of military reforms wouldn't fit into a 20-second evening news blip about the anniversary of the Air Force, so it's unlikely you'll be hearing much about them during the extravaganza to come. But if the Air Force is to have a 50th anniversary—and a hundredth—reforms are urgently required. The irony of one service staging a public festival to celebrate its bureaucratic escape from having to cooperate with another may be lost on the media, but it will not be lost on U.S. soldiers in future combat. ■

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NATIONAL ARCHIVES

More than disciples?: *Gandhi and two "aides"*

Gandhi's Girls

After the Mahatma's sex scandal, character is the issue in the campaign for Indian independence

India, 1942: In the end, the political demise of Mohandas Gandhi came with stunning speed. Until last week, he was the revered Mahatma—the Great Soul—leader of 400 million Indians in the drive for independence from British colonial rule. With the election of the Labour Government in Britain increasingly likely, chances never seemed brighter for the free India that Gandhi had sought for so long.

But by week's end, in the wake of newspaper accounts of Gandhi's sexual peccadillos, bizarre personal habits and mind-bending cult practices, his career—and perhaps Indian nationalism—lay in ruins. Those closest to Gandhi likened it to a Greek tragedy, a giant cut down by his own hands. "Gandhi's personal life was a political time bomb waiting to explode," said one distraught associate. "Now it's finally blown up in our faces."

Ironically, Gandhi set the stage for his demise through his own pronouncements on sex. His obsession began in 1885 when he learned of his father's death while in bed with his wife. By 1906, he had taken a much celebrated vow of celibacy. An extraordinary commitment, but even then Gandhi was angling for moral loopholes. "If for want of physical enjoyment," he wrote, "the mind wallows in thoughts of enjoyment, then it is legitimate to satisfy the hungers of the body." For years, supporters now admit, Gandhi had pushed the outer limits of propriety. "The man in the loin cloth, it seems, has thought a good deal about loins," said one observer.

After years of such rumors, it was the specific nature of the latest charges, followed by other damaging revelations, that undermined his political base. The shock waves were felt throughout the British empire—and new questions were raised about how relevant a politician's character was to his work, and whether in the case of Gandhi, the Fourth Estate went too far.

A Spiritual Experience? The trouble began a week ago when the *New Delhi Herald* published a front page story reporting that Gandhi had spent the weekend with five attractive young women—aides in his nonviolent campaign—at his ashram in Sevegram. Meanwhile, his wife Kasturbai was 2,000 miles away at their mountain retreat in Kashmir recuperating from an illness.

Escorting them was Gandhi's aide, the movie star-handsome Jawaharlal Nehru. With his urbane charm and stylish taste in jackets, Nehru never had any pretense to celibacy. (His intimacies with Lady Mountbatten are infamous.) Campaign insiders said that they had long been alarmed by Gandhi's ties to Nehru, and several suggested their time together be cut back. "We told him to dump Nehru," said one aide. "But the old man would just sit there and smile. He didn't see the storm coming."

It was advice Gandhi must now wish he had heeded. *New Delhi Herald* reporters and photographers were hiding in nearby bushes, guarding both the front and rear entrances. Except for a breath of fresh air at 3 A.M., the women had spent the entire night with the erstwhile spritual leader. If the chronology was indicting, the photographs were positively damning. Wielding telephoto lenses, the *Herald* photographers snapped shots that seem sure to snuff out a political career. The scene: Gandhi and his cabal sprawled on his rope bed—naked.

Late Sunday morning, a weary Gandhi finally spotted the *Herald* reporters and confronted them. The women were only there as an experiment in self-restraint, he insisted, and nothing sexual transpired between them. "True *brachmacharya* (celibacy) is this: one who, by constant-attendance upon God, has become capable of lying nak-

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INDIAN EMBASSY

Character flaw?: *Gandhi stalked by questions about his judgment—and candor*

ed with naked women, however beautiful they may be, without being in any manner whatsoever sexually excited. I have done nothing wrong," Gandhi insisted.

The Indian public wasn't buying it. His explanations had become *the* issue of the campaign, according to a poll taken two days after the *Herald* story broke. Only 34 percent of those questioned believed Gandhi's claim that he hadn't had sexual relations with the women—and a scant 16 percent believed he hadn't been sexually excited. A mere 26 percent claimed to be disturbed by the incident itself; what bothered them, said 75 percent of India's citizens, was the appearance of hypocrisy.

But the questions kept coming. Every stop on his campaign swing turned into a media circus. A protest march in Dandi was cut short by a throng of reporters, barraging Gandhi with questions about his sexual self-control. A new low in political discourse may have been reached when a reporter for the *Bombay Post* asked during a sit-in, "Did you get an erection last weekend?" Although Gandhi was well within his rights when he responded, "I don't have to answer that," some observers felt that the appearance of evasiveness further eroded his credibility.

Matters were only made worse when the *Herald* was widely rumored to be on the verge of publishing more damaging photos—of nothing less than unmistakeable signs of Gandhi's physical excitement. When a pack of enterprising reporters caught up with her at her sickbed, Mrs. Gandhi stuck by her man. She told them: "Honestly, if Mahatma told me that nothing happened, then nothing happened."

More Revelations: Still, by week's end, the prospects for Gandhi's political recovery looked grim, despite his denials and counter-attacks. In the next few days, there were other newspaper accounts of Gandhi's celibacy experiments. *The Bombay Post* ran an insiders' account of life in Gandhi's ashram. Contrary to the image he had cultivated of a gentle, loving soul, the two-part series, "The Dark Side of Gandhi," detailed the brutal regimen imposed on his followers. His 100-plus disciples, forced to live in primitive mud and bamboo huts, were awakened daily at 4 A.M. to eat nothing but a few crumbs of unseasoned vegetarian gruel and dry wheat. Weakened, they were subjected to long harangues on arcane religious topics. Eyewitness accounts were gruesome. "We had to spend hours on our knees chanting prayers and spinning cotton," said one American follower who defected. "We were like zombies." Cult experts say Gandhi had dozens of ingenious schemes to weaken his followers' ties to their families and strengthen his control over them. Their secret name for their leader: "Bapu," or father.

The *Post* story was the final straw. In his political death throes, Gandhi made a dramatic appearance before his supporters—and stopped just short of abandoning his campaign for a free India. "I intended, in all honesty, to come to you this sunrise and tell you that I was leaving the cause. But, then, after tossing and turning all night, as I have through this ordeal, I woke up and said, 'Heck, my goodness, no.' "

Instead, Gandhi with his back against the proverbial wall reached deep into his bag of tricks and, like a cat with nine lives, pulled yet another rabbit from his hat: a hunger strike. Over the course of a fifty-year career, Gandhi had turned this familiar strategy into a crowd pleaser that could move the masses or pummel an Em-

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pire. "Under certain circumstances, fasting is the one weapon God has given us for use in times of utter helplessness," said Gandhi defiantly.

No one doubts that Gandhi can go weeks on end without even a drop of chutney. But political analysts are doubtful that the man, once dubbed "Mr. Hunger Strike," could make this latest gambit work. "Gandhi represents the politics of the past," said Patreek Chardeli. "A new generation of Indians wants vital, robust leadership. I don't think a starving old man is well positioned to do it." More ominously, other pundits said the political damage was too much to contain—even with a high-profile play for sympathy. Davidahr Garthati, the media consultant credited with Gandhi's decision to abandon the suit and tie of his early barrister days and "go native" instead, was equally pessimistic. Garthati noted, "His celibacy *shtick* was crucial to the saint image he'd cultivated for all these years. The non-violence thing, the spinning wheels, the fasting—that was brilliant. But his celibacy really set him apart, made him genuinely holy. Without it, he's just another pacifist do-gooder."

Political opponents moved quickly to capitalize on the gaffe. Columnist Robert Novakilli, a longtime Gandhi critic, lambasted Gandhi's hijinks from his nationally broadcast McRajan Group. "The real perversion is Gandhi's political agenda. For years, he and his pacifist pals have had two things in mind: tinkering with the salt tax and cozying up to Stalin." And his most formidable rival, Moslem leader Muhammed Ali Jinnah, sought to subtly position himself to pick up Gandhi's fleeing supporters. "Family life has always been sacred to me," he told reporters, standing outside his family's mosque with his wife and daughter. "I don't think it's my place to comment on the controversy surrounding some of those in the public eye. It's up to the Indian people to judge for themselves."

And their judgment seemed harsh. Within a matter of days, the squalid controversy over Gandhi's private parts turned him from a national hero into a laughingstock. On his nightly radio program, comedian Charu Carson quipped, "Well, at least we know the Mahatma is *big* enough for the job of running India." He added, to more laughter, "I guess he was really meditating his brains out this weekend." Editorial cartoonists had a field day, as a bulging loin cloth quickly became the Mahatma's new trademark.

In the next few days more revelations came trickling out about other celibacy "experiments" he had been conducting since his forties, including one report of a pleasure trip down the Ganges with Nehru and two female assistants on the awkwardly named *Holy Cow*. The *Post* also revealed that at the end of each day, he had one of his attractive, young female disciples administer an enema, which he insisted was for "health" and "cleansing" purposes. "Gandhi gives as much as he takes—even to total strangers," said one Gandhi aide.

New Ground rules: Gandhi's sudden demise triggered an orgy of self-examination in the media. Did the press go too far? "At first, I agonized over whether we should risk tarnishing a great man's reputation with close-up photos of naked women and speculation about his sex life," said Ved Fiedleraba, who led the *Herald* stakeout. "But then I realized that the public had a right to know." Fiedleraba reasoned that if there was the slightest possibility that Gandhi was lying about his celibacy, then that raised serious questions about his candor and his ability to negotiate with foreign leaders were India ever to become independent. "So, naturally, it was my moral obligation to set up camp outside his bedroom."

Clearly, the ground rules have changed. Historically, the press has had a gentlemen's agreement with India's rulers. When Viceroy Lord Lillybottom himself brought a bevy of beauties to the Taj Mahal, the muckrakers of Madras looked the other way. But with the rise of Indian Nationalism and the decline of British sea power, the mores of Indian society have been loosened—and so have those of the press. Today, nothing is off limits, even enemas. Many wondered what's next: asking Jinnah whether he had violated the Koran's strictures against amorous relations with pigs or other unholy animals? But for now it was Gandhi who was caught in this whirlwind. This smiling man, from a more polite age, seemed oblivious to the new rules of his beloved India.

Whatever the press's ultimate responsibility, the longstanding doubts over Gandhi's character left India's nationalist movement in disarray. Behind the scenes, some Congress party operatives were privately relieved. "We feel betrayed," said one. "Gandhi promised he would remain celibate, at least until India achieved independence. Now that he's gone, at least we can move on."

Ultimately, Gandhi's fate hinged on those questions of character, rather than any moral revulsion. In her essay "Gandhi's Women Problem, Women's Gandhi Problem," Sukai Lessardai voiced the concerns of many women wary of Gandhi's apparent philandering. "Whether or not he was celibate, his need to prove his spiritual manhood by lying with five naked women is an affront to the dignity and equality of women everywhere." And as Willmed Schneidermanai of the Indian Enterprise Institute points out, "It's not so much the fact that he slept with these women or regularly indulged in enemas; it's that he showed such bad judgment in doing so. I think this raises serious questions about Gandhi's self-discipline and insensitivity to the appearances of impropriety—and finally about Gandhi's ability to lead a successful non-violent movement."

Now the question is: Whither India? In his stead, there are other leaders who could possibly win independence for India—the Moslem Jinnah, or even Vallabhaai Patel—but neither has the stature and name recognition of a Gandhi. Non-violent disobedience seems a memory now. And nationalism itself is on the backburner. As the likely next Viceroy of the Raj, Lord Louis Mountbatten, points out, "If an entire nation could be led down the primrose path by this charlatan and hypocrite, the Indian people are not yet ready for independence." Wise heads in India and Britain agreed, and with Gandhi's political demise, a tumultuous chapter in India's history closes, and calmer times lie ahead.

ART LEVINE *in New Dehli. With bureau reports from Bombay, Dandi, and Kashmir*

(Much of this article is fantasy, but all the facts about Gandhi's sex practices are true. *Eds.)*

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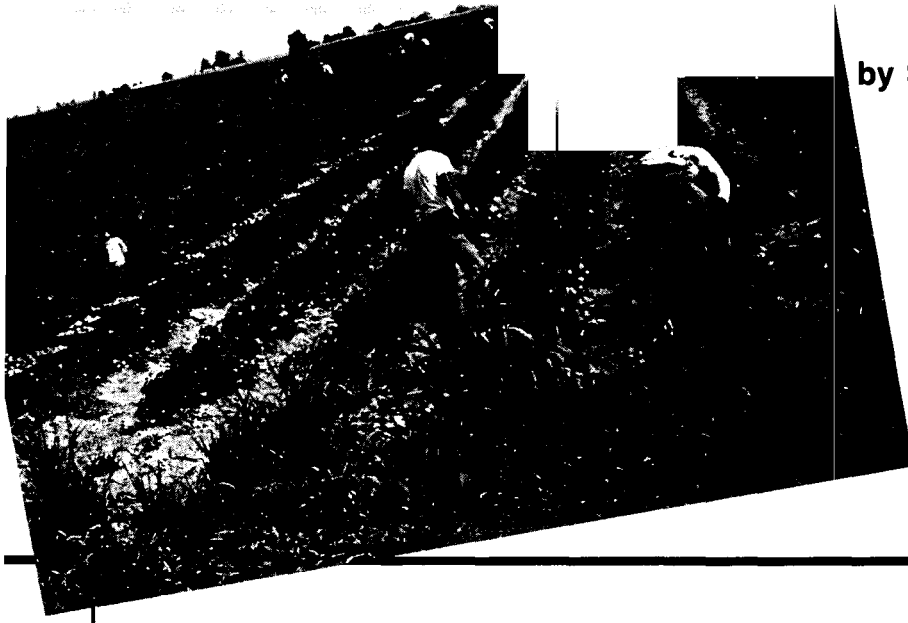

by Steven Waldman

THE BEST & OF AMERI

The words of Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor, have often been cited to summarize everything that is wrong with unions: "What does labor want? More!" More wages even when profits are declining. More benefits even when generous compensation is pricing products out of competition. More work rules that stifle productivity. More political power to follow selfish agendas. Seldom has a man been misquoted so appropriately.

Gompers's actual statement, made in an 1893 speech to the International Labor Congress, revealed a somewhat broader, more enlightened vision of organized labor. "We want more school houses, and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more constant work and less crime," Gompers said. He appealed for an eight-hour day, improved health and safety, more justice, less greed, and concluded with a somewhat dated but inspirational call for "more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures to make manhood more noble, womanhood more beautiful, and childhood more happy and bright."

Labor has, in recent years, lived too much by the essence of the abridged quote rather than the loftier one, sometimes because callous management has left it little choice and sometimes because of selfishness. But things have begun to change. In some cases management has mellowed. Just as important, plant closings, concessionary wage agreements, and the rapid rise of union busting firms have forced unions to abandon—often reluctantly—the traditional rules of the labor movement.

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The experimentation has taken many forms—a wages-for-power swap at an airline, a union-run supermarket in Philadelphia, a reduction of work rules at an auto plant in California, a union-built homeless shelter in Los Angeles. Unions have also adopted a variety of sophisticated new methods of putting financial pressure on companies beyond setting up pickets outside the closed plant gates.

As unions become more aggressive—strikes were up in 1986 for the first time in a decade—it is critical that their efforts be channeled well. The persistence of corrupt, selfish, shortsighted unions will doom the labor movement.

What is a "good" union? Fundamentally, it is one with a broad view of both what to demand and how to demand it. It is concerned with worker power and conditions *and* the quality of the product or service. It is effective, clean, nondiscriminatory and applies its political muscle not just for itself but for the public good.

Because there are 60,000 union locals in America, some of the most horrendous coexisting in the same national union as some of the most angelic, to definitively select the best and worst is impossible. But drawing on interviews with academics, unionists, and labor reporters, it is possible to identify the unions exhibiting those qualities that the next labor movement should encourage and those it should purge.

The Best

Farm Labor Organizing Committee—Baldemar Valasquez has for the past nine years campaigned

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THE WORST
AN UNIONS

James Hamilton, *The Village Voice*

with messianic fervor for probably the worst treated workers in America, migrant farmers. But he has succeeded in this difficult area of organizing not just because he preached a compelling gospel, but because he followed the money.

Valasquez founded FLOC in 1967. After years of organizing, it had gained only a few limited agreements with growers in Northern Ohio, and Third World conditions persisted. Pay was often below minimum wage, workers were continuously exposed to pesticides, and most farms had inadequate or nonexistent toilet facilities. He concluded that growers were not budging because they were in no position to. If they raised wages, and therefore tomato prices, the dominant corporate food processors to whom they sold—primarily Campbell's and Libby's—would simply announce they were taking their business to one of the dozens of other growers in Ohio.

So in 1979 FLOC took the unusual step of bypassing the employers by launching a nationwide boycott of Campbell's. Although Campbell's denies the boycotts had any effect on sales, the effort did stain the company's Mmmm-mmm-good image, particularly when the National Council of Churches—an umbrella group representing many Protestant denominations—and several Catholic bishops threatened to join the boycott.

To broaden its attack, FLOC brought in Ray Rogers, the labor consultant credited with pioneering the modern "corporate campaign" in which unions target the financial lifelines of intransigent companies. FLOC and the churches, joined by unions and progressive groups from around the country, picketed Philadelphia National Bank, one of Campbell's major creditors. One month after FLOC focused on Philadelphia National, sympathetic depositors threatened to pull $500,000 out of the bank. TV and newspaper accounts referred to Campbell's role in maintaining the deplorable conditions. The stain on the company's corporate image grew darker. "You had these little nuns get up at stockholders' meetings saying I have one share and you're a dirty so and so," says John Dunlop, secretary of labor in the Ford administration, who was involved in the FLOC battle.

Dunlop chaired a commission that was instrumental in pressuring Campbell's to negotiate. Established originally at Campbell's request to set up anti-poverty programs, not collective bargaining agreements, it soon began acting as a private National Labor Relations Board. (The federal NLRB doesn't have jurisdiction over farm workers, a testimony to the power of agribusiness.) The commission included Douglas Fraser, former president of the United Auto Workers, a prominent Catholic leader, an Agriculture Department official under two Republican administrations, and the president of one of the Midwest's largest agribusinesses. The group was too respectable to be ignored.

The turning point came in the fall of 1985 when Campbell's officials, after prodding from the churches and the commission, took an unprecedented step. They agreed to negotiate with the migrant workers—people who didn't work for them. The migrant workers, growers, and Campbell's announced a three-way pact in February 1986 in which the growers agreed to give limited medical insurance, a paid holiday, and an increase

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in wages from an average of $3.95 an hour to $4.50 for workers on mechanized farms. (The wages for the lower-paid handpickers are still being negotiated.) That was possible only because Campbell's agreed to purchase a fixed portion of growers' crops, a guarantee that allowed them to increase wages without fear the giant processor would take its business elsewhere. The precedent set, the H.J. Heinz company settled with FLOC in April. And 23 of the largest cucumber growers in Ohio and Michigan have also signed agreements. Over the past 15 years, FLOC has also persuaded about 80 percent of growers to install toilet facilities.

The lesson for other unions? "If you follow the money," says Valasquez, "you'll get to the people with real financial power."

Los Angeles County Labor Federation—The labor "bosses" of Los Angeles seem to have city hall in their pockets. The Federation's executive secretary is a close advisor of the mayor and president of the Park and Recreation Commission. Another top Federation official is chairman of the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency; the vice chair of the Federation is on the City Planning Commission. But what earns the federation praise is that it has shown that union political clout can be as noble as it is effective.

In January 1985 the Federation organized a volunteer effort to construct a 138-bed temporary homeless shelter, arranging for contractors to donate some materials, and purchasing the rest itself. Most important, about 300 union workers spent a week constructing the shelter on a vacant city lot. "I told them, if you think you're going to put it up in a week you're crazy," Andy Raubeson, president of the SRO Housing Corporation, told union leaders.

Not only was the shelter ready for occupancy in ten days, but the well-connected union leaders were able to cut through reams of paperwork in 72 hours, even receiving an exemption from the distinctly L.A. ordinance requiring the shelter to have a parking lot. In addition to aiding the homeless, the Federation has helped restore a fire-damaged hospice for battered women and worked with the Los Angeles archdiocese on other community projects.

The Federation's efforts are particularly impressive given the traditional reluctance of construction-related unions to participate in or even allow poverty programs that require volunteer or low wage labor. The New York building trades unions, by comparison, recently stalled an effort to build permanent housing for the homeless because, for cost reasons, it would have used prefabricated materials, which require less labor than housing built from scratch, although more than that not built at all.

Though their hearts might not be in it, the New Yorkers might consider that the Los Angeles approach has a pragmatic side to it. As Bill Luddy, spokesman for the Federation, said, "If you have a favorite charity and you find out the union built a new wing for it, then the next time you go into a store that's non-union, you might think about it."

United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Local 277—The traditional union answer to a plant closing has been to curse the darkness instead of seeking the light. The local representing the Morse Tool Cutting Plant in New Bedford, Massachussetts has shown that unions can help save jobs in even the gloomiest cases, if they are savvy, persistent, and resourceful.

For about a hundred years Morse was *the* name in cutting tools. In 1968, Gulf and Western bought the company, and operated it profitably into the eighties. But in 1982, the conglomerate, citing declining profits, demanded a 20 percent wage and benefit cut. The union responded with consultants' studies showing that Gulf and Western had invested little in plant modernization compared to its competitors. The union went on strike and launched a community-wide "Stop Milking Morse" campaign. After 13 weeks, Gulf and Western dropped the concession demands, but only hired back 375 employees, roughly half the workforce. The company still refused to invest significantly in new equipment.

In 1983, the company announced it was going to jettison the plant, but showed no interest in finding a buyer who would agree not to close it. The union again organized a community effort to keep it open, gaining a crucial promise from the mayor to seize the factory under the powers of eminent domain if necessary. When the accountants at Gulf and Western calculated that selling to someone who would keep the plant open was more lucrative than letting the city name its price, they quickly found a private investor, James Lambert, who made the promise. The union took a wage freeze and gave up three weeks vacation to help out the new boss.

Their white knight turned out to be the village pauper. In January, Lambert, who had financed the purchase mostly through debt, declared bankruptcy—the union claims he didn't invest in modernization either—and put the plant on the

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Jackie Presser has made a valiant effort to change. To improve the union's image, for example, he has virtually abandoned his customary black shirt and white tie in favor of business suits.

auction block. The first bid came from the Harbour Group tool company, which already owned several tool plants. Harbour wanted to close the plant, take some of the machines, swipe the customer lists and, most important, elope with that prestigious Morse name to use for its own tools. The union wasn't thrilled with the offer. It argued that since Morse still had a reputation for high-quality products, the plant could turn a profit if only an investor would help modernize it.

The union again hijacked the financial dealings. It appealed for another bidder and got one, International Twist Drill Holding Ltd. of Scotland. To help Twist Drill, the union gained promises of city and state aid, discussed the possibility of more wage concessions, and organized rallies featuring kilt-clad bagpipe players.

In June, a bankruptcy court sold Morse to Twist Drill. Twist Drill has promised not only to keep the plant open but to make multi-million dollar modernization investments. "This shows that if someone announces a closing you just don't have to sit back and take it," says Tom Medeiros, a member of the union. "We really believe that no matter whose name was on the plant it is our plant."

Association of Flight Attendants—The first president of what is now the Association of Flight Attendants was fired in the middle of her term in 1946. Not for leading some disruptive strike that left thousands of untanned vacationers stranded on a runway. United Airlines dismissed her for getting married. Not only could flight attendants not marry then, but they couldn't get pregnant, be older than 32, be black, have improperly manicured fingernails, be even slightly overweight, or have children. Most of these policies have been eliminated or relaxed, in large part through the efforts of the Association of Flight Attendants, the oldest and largest union of flight attendants and the first AFL-CIO union run by women.

As a result of law suits and collective bargaining in the sixties and seventies, the age restrictions and marriage bans were lifted and maternity leaves were introduced. Blacks are now employed, as are men and some slightly Rubenesque women. The removal of discriminatory barriers along with improvements in wages, benefits, and work schedules have helped transform the "fly girl" job into a career. In 1967, flight attendants stayed a year or two; the average tenure today is ten years and climbing.

The flight attendants are still judged by some rather unusual employment standards. Most airlines have weight requirements which, though less strict than in earlier years, are extreme compared to most other service-oriented jobs. Moreover, flight attendants have not fared well since deregulation. To its discredit, the AFA, along with the other flight attendants unions, in 1982 accepted a two-tier wage system that passes the burden of concessions on to future members. While an entry-level union job paid $1,314 per month in 1982 it now pays $1,198 a month for 150 to 225 hours of work, a grueling schedule even if you get five hours off to see downtown Toledo. The unions have been lucky to hold on to what they have; intense airline competition has put many flight attendants in the same position as steel workers: accept concessions or lose jobs. The threat is effective not just because many of the companies are in shaky financial condition but because each opening for a flight attendant job is met with a flood of applications. When Karl Marx wrote about the army of unemployed suppressing wages he probably had not envisioned a battalion of 21-year-old women yearning to see Hong Kong, but the effect is the same.

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But while they have slipped on wages in the past few years, they have excelled in other areas. They have, for example, aggressively lobbied the Federal Aviation Administration to require nonflammable cabin materials, maintain an adequate number of emergency exits, and reduce carry-on luggage, which sometimes falls on people. "They have been very effective in keeping the safety issues up front," says Patricia Goldman, vice chair of the National Transportation Safety Board. In addition, they initiated an Employee Assistance Plan that is considered a model by experts in workplace health because it emphasizes teaching flight attendants to refer troubled colleagues to medical treatment or psychological counseling rather than relying on supervisors to do it. While this type of Employee Assistance Plan is unique among unions, it is typical of the AFA's insistence that flight attendants be treated with sensitivity rather than as sex objects who are there mostly to lure businessmen aboard.

American Federation of Teachers—Most education reform is a potential threat to teachers. Merit pay can be used by principals to punish dissident teachers. Giving schools the power to fire incompetent teachers can undermine the job security of good but feisty ones. Teacher exams can be an arbitrary and demeaning way of judging talent. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has made a major contribution toward improving education by viewing these potential problems as hazards that need to be overcome, rather than as justifications for blocking reform.

When Texas passed its comprehensive education reform package in 1984, three teachers' associations opposed it and one supported it—the state affiliate of the AFT. In Tennessee, the local chapter of the National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest teachers union, opposed the state's nationally acclaimed education reform. The AFT affiliate supported it. The same pattern was repeated in Arkansas.

Not only has the AFT been consistently ahead of its larger rival, the NEA, it has made educational improvement a top priority and, in some cases, has been down right innovative. The AFT has campaigned for a national teacher exam for new teachers and for starting education earlier. It has endorsed some forms of peer review, a career ladder that adopts elements of merit pay, and special programs to attract talented new teachers. The Toledo, Ohio, affiliate has even instituted a program to weed out incompetent teachers, perhaps the trickiest reform for teachers or any other unions. Recognizing that bad teachers affect both educational quality and morale, AFT officials in Toledo helped devise a system in which teachers could be fired if both the principal and a peer review committee agreed they were incompetent. Since 1981, 26 teachers have been singled out under the program; 15 are no longer teaching in the city.

AFT has also pushed hard, along with the NEA, for perhaps the most important reform—higher salaries. Between 1980 and 1987 the average teacher salary, in constant dollars, jumped from $21,673 to $25,240, in part because of teachers union lobbying.

Albert Shanker, the AFT president, has the flexibility to take bolder positions than the NEA's leadership in part because he is an autocrat, but there are still issues he has held back on. Most significantly, in emphasizing "professionalism" he has continued to insist teachers should take a series of often useless education courses before they are fully certified. Moreover, his hawkish views on foreign policy and his leadership of a racially polarizing New York City teachers strike in 1968 have made some liberals reluctant to join hands with him.

But Shanker is not likely to retreat on most reform issues. In a recent article, he offered hope—and a threat. "If things get only slightly better—or if they get worse—all the powers we can exercise at the bargaining table or in the legislative arena will not be enough to stop an angry public from getting even with the public schools. But even if we could fool the public we cannot fool ourselves. Nor would we want to. In the end it is we who must serve as the protectors of our students and our profession."

United Auto Workers—One might have expected it from a hippie-turned-entrepreneur or from desperate workers faced with an immediate plant shut-down. But ten years ago it seemed unlikely that the union fighting hardest for a creative, flexible workplace would be the one that had fought most ferociously for stifling work rules and don't-tell-me-about-declining-profits wage increases. But with UAW president Douglas Fraser's appointment to the Chrysler board in 1980, the union adopted a radical principle: unions can take responsibility for economic growth.

For example, Ford's Employee Involvement program, credited with helping the company's dramatic financial turnaround, not only brought workers in on shop-level decisions about production and work conditions, but gave workers the authority to stop assembly lines to cut down defects. The program also eliminated many job

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classifications. In other industry plants that have more than 100 rigid job classifications, a few absentees can cripple an assembly line and worker tedium is unrelieved.

The contract bargained with the New United Motor Manufacturing, Inc. (NUMMI), the joint General Motors-Toyota venture in Fremont, California, created a similar system of small teams, with each worker trained at many tasks. After years of labor-management relations so bitter that the plant was referred to as "the battleship," introduction of employee control dropped the absentee rate from 20 percent to 2.5 percent today. Grievances went from thousands to dozens. And NUMMI's product, the Chevrolet Nova, has received good reviews. "Nobody thinks we died and went to heaven, but when we have a problem we talk it over and we solve it," says Gus Tilly, vice president of the local. "Quality is up. Last month we had one of the best orders yet. People feel like they're listened to."

These agreements also include incentive pay plans that tie some wages to company profits. The UAW and the auto companies have also set up a $1 billion job bank to retrain and reassign workers who lose their jobs due to new technology, plant consolidation, or other efficiency measures.

Another area in which the UAW has forged ahead is in protecting workers' health and safety. Historically, the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union has been the most vigilant and sophisticated in protecting worker health and safety. But occupational health and safety experts around the country agree the UAW is now the leader. UAW's most important innovation was dropping the assumption that OSHA would protect workers or, more importantly, that company doctors would honestly report health and safety problems. (The history of asbestos workers shows that company health officers know who signs their paychecks.) There are now more than 300 health and safety representatives around the country paid for by the companies but hired by, and answerable to, the UAW. The union now has both legislative and contractual rights to investigate many health and safety problems without management approval. In 1984, it negotiated a clause under which the auto companies contribute two to four cents for every hour worked into a huge pool, now totalling $30 million, for research and worker health and safety training.

On a national level, the UAW health and safety staff not only sets policy but sponsors detailed epidemiological studies to pinpoint problems. One such study, for example, found that employees working with hot tar had a ten times greater incidence of cancer than others at the plant. The union got the company to use containers that reduced the tar fumes and dramatically cut the risk. "For several years we had mentioned the tar problem," says Michael Silverstein, assistant director of occupational health and safety. "But they had never done anything until we came with concrete mortality studies."

The UAW is not without its serious defects. It has increasingly exhibited the worst elements of Big Labor thuggishness toward the rank and file. For example, Jerry Tucker, former assistant director of the UAW and a talented organizer, was fired by the central leadership for challenging the UAW-leadership-backed candidate for the regional directorship. In addition, the union has allowed industry-wide bargaining to disintegrate, in some cases setting off "whipsawing," when a company has used the concessionary agreement of one local to justify concessions from other locals.

Worst

International Brotherhood of Teamsters—By far the most common response when I asked, "What are the worst unions?" was "well, besides the Teamsters, there's. . . ." On no other point was there so much agreement.

The Justice Department is even planning the drastic step of trying to place the international union in trusteeship—a move the Reagan administration was less eager to make when it needed the union's political support; they were the only union to support Reagan twice and one of the first groups to receive a presidential courtesy call in 1981. Is the Teamsters's reputation really deserved? Look at it this way: on average, from 1979 to 1984, a Teamster official was indicted by federal authorities every eight days. The 225 indictments ranged from racketeering, arson, and aggravated assault to extortion, bribery, and pension fund embezzlement. Just a few bad apples? "Every big Teamster local union had some connection with organized crime," Roy Williams, a former Teamsters International president, has testified. In fact, the President's Commission on Organized Crime report, in a chapter on the Teamsters titled "The Most Controlled Union," estimated that the majority of Teamsters members are in locals controlled or influenced by the mob. Three of the past five Teamsters national presidents have done time. One of the

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"clean" ones, the current president, Jackie Presser, is currently under indictment for putting mob-tied "ghost employees" on the payroll of his Cleveland local.

But maybe you think the most important question is not a little corruption here and there but whether the Teamsters helps its members. Unfortunately, while its members probably have higher wages than they would if they weren't in a union, several of the organized crime schemes for involving labor unions have stung workers' wages and pension funds. For example, the federal government placed the Central States Pension Fund—also known as the mafia bank—in trusteeship after the Teamsters spent millions from retirement benefits on mafia-related loans to Las Vegas casinos. Organized crime also profits from sweetheart deals in which mob-tied union officials allow companies to pay lower wages or benefits for kickbacks. In the seventies, for example, corrupt local union officials got kickbacks for working with Eugene Boffa, a mafia associate who employed Teamster truck drivers and warehousemen. Boffa would arrange to have corporations fire their workers and hire his at reduced wage or benefit levels. Boffa got an extra percentage and the company got lower labor costs.

Even when they're not flouting the law, the Teamsters leadership serves its members badly. Since 1983, the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), a reform group within the union, has led a successful campaign to reject three contracts, including one in 1983 that set up a dramatically lower wage for new employees. A two-tier contract "not only cuts the wage bill for the employer, it divides the work force," TDU literature argued. "It sells out the union's future, in the form of the new hires, the younger workers."

Teamsters rank and file are also ripped off when their dues go to pay for the lavish salaries of union officials. There are more than 100 union leaders in the Teamsters who earn more than $100,000, according to TDU. Teamsters president Jackie Presser nets more than $500,000 from his various union jobs, more than twice as much as the next highest-paid American union leader, Weldon L. Mathis, secretary-treasurer of the Teamsters.

There are, of course, honest, effective locals within the Teamsters—many of them work in areas not traditionally associated with the union, such as government sector employees. In fact, only 10 percent of the union's members are now truckers. That might be a hopeful development since organized crime originally thrived in the Teamsters in large part because truckers have natural leverage—companies depend heavily on getting their goods in a timely manner. But diversification has its troubling side too: the Teamsters now represent the Flint, Michigan police department and are organizing others. Moreover, the union's outreach effort has tended to take the form of stealing workers from other unions rather than organizing the non-unionized.

Presser has made a valiant effort to change. To improve the union's image, for example, he has virtually abandoned his customary black shirt and white tie in favor of business suits. But such reforms notwithstanding, cleaning up the Teamsters is no easy task. On the first day of the 1983 convention of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), the Brotherhood of Loyal Americans and Strong Teamsters (BLAST) chartered nine buses from around the country, went to the site of the meeting, pushed aside local police, chased the group's members out of the hall, tore down banners, and took over the convention. The raid party included not just rank and file, but two local presidents, one vice-president, two secretary-treasurers, three organizers, and at least ten business agents. Jackie Presser was touched. He told a Teamsters meeting in Cleveland: "I could have imagined a lot of stronger, tougher guys going there, and tough truck drivers, but I was looking through the pictures, and you know who was in the front line of a real wild fight with state highway patrolmen and police there? The secretary-treasurer of our joint council, Bill Evans, who's had two heart attacks.... Bill, I want to tell you, you're a hell of a guy to take it on yourself.... I'm going to tell you something. We should be doing more of that. I'm going to tell you, I'm not going to let up on these people."

If there's rank and file discontent with Presser it's difficult to tell since his rise to the presidency has rarely been inconvenienced by a democratic election. Presser's union career began when his father, a national Teamsters official, appointed him secretary-treasurer of local 507 in Cleveland. (That local hasn't held a contested election in 17 years.) In 1981, the Teamsters general executive board appointed Presser a national vice president and in 1982 made him president. He wasn't "democratically" elected until last June at the quinquennial national convention. If the power of incumbency weren't enough to assure his election, the dominance of delegates from mob-dominated locals made him a formidable candidate.

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Despite the odds, the reformist TDU has made some progress, scoring victories in scattered local elections in addition to contract votes. One of the most hopeful events occurred in 1985 when Linda Gregg, a forklift operator from Denver and a member of the TDU policy board, was elected secretary-treasurer of the Denver local. Not surprisingly, the national Teamsters board overturned the results and ordered a new election. The second time Gregg swept the entire TDU slate in with her.

Sheet Metal Workers' International Association, Local 28—The building trades have always been—and still are—among the least racially integrated jobs in the country. To a great extent this isn't because of racist companies or indifferent government officials. And it's not because the jobs are too highly skilled: the percentage of accountants that are black is higher than the percentage of carpenters who are. It's because of unions. One of the worst examples is New York City's Local 28, which has shown unparalleled creativity during its long history of keeping out blacks.

Efforts to force Local 28 to integrate began in 1948, when the New York State Commission Against Discrimination ordered the union to drop its "caucasian only" contract clause. The local changed the words, but not its process of selecting apprentices, the first step toward full union membership. All new apprentices had to be sponsored for membership by current ones. All of the current ones, of course, were white. And all construction hiring came through the union. By 1964, there was still not a single black worker in the union. When the state Commission on Human Rights and the state Supreme Court ordered Local 28 to admit some blacks, the union refused.

Over the next 22 years, various courts held the local in contempt of court orders and civil rights laws, but the union discovered other ways to keep out blacks. It administered entrance exams that tested knowledge of classical music, Shakespeare and, in one case, asked which president was assassinated by Leon F. Czolgosz (it was McKinley). The union then refused to abide by the scores when minorities received "unfair tutoring" and passed in unreasonably high numbers.

The local also defiantly ignored city attempts to integrate the construction trades. In 1968, the city delayed 26 contracts worth more than $6 million because Local 28 had not supplied city

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contractors with a single non-white worker. Two years later, the city began requiring contractors to employ one minority trainee for every four journeyman members. One local refused until the end to comply: Local 28. In early 1974, the city tried to assign six minority trainees to sheetmetal contractors working on city projects. Local 28 members put down their tools and stopped working in protest.

By 1974, only 3 percent of the union's total membership was non-white, even though the available work pool was 29 percent minorities. A year later another court ruled the low rate was part of a concerted, often elaborate, effort to keep minorities out. When demands by blacks for membership increased, the union simply restricted its total size. During labor shortages, rather than take on new blacks, Local 28 recalled retired workers, who brought doctors' notes attesting to their fitness, or went to other unions. Not to the Sheet Metal Local 400, a predominantly black local, but to the mostly white plumbers, metal workers, and carpenters unions or to sheetmetal workers unions outside of New York City.

By 1982, several court orders later, the minority membership was up to 10.8 percent, but the union was again found in contempt of civil rights laws because it continued to seek whites from sister locals, had restricted use of the apprenticeship program through which blacks were supposed to enter the trade, and refused to publicize membership opportunities. The next year a court found it discriminatory and ordered various affirmative action measures taken. Last June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that because of the "egregious" history of discrimination and "patently contumaceous" refusal to abide by court orders, an affirmative action goal of 29 percent was justified.

International Longshoremen's Association—The mafia may rob pensions, break kneecaps, and murder critics, but according to the President's Commission on Organized Crime, the mob "continues to display an adaptability to technological innovation on the waterfront." The commission's report last year pointed out that when modern containerization techniques for unloading greater amounts of cargo were introduced, organized crime immediately moved in to profit from it.

The speed with which ships must be unloaded historically lent itself nicely to extortion plans as well as legitimate union organizing. The ILA probably has the highest ratio of indicted officials to members—115 officials of the 69,000-member union faced charges between 1979 and 1984. The union is allegedly dominated by the Gambino crime family, one of whose former chiefs, Carlo Gambino, once described himself as a "labor relations consultant."

But it's not just mafia control that earns the ILA a spot on the worst list; the union has also made a major contribution to the disintegration of New York's ports. In exchange for agreeing to containerization, the ILA negotiated an agreement under which members were paid a guaranteed annual income of roughly $32,000 whether they worked or not. In New York, the system was paid for in part by an assessment on ship tonnage, a tax that drove many shippers to other ports.

United Food and Commercial Workers—All wage concessions are not created equal. No union wants to take paycuts, but when they become unavoidable, unions can help construct giveback plans that spread the burden fairly. The UFCW provides the model for the wrong way to do it.

Representing both meatpacking and retail grocery clerks, the one million-member UFCW is diverse and includes many wise and strong individual unions, most notably Local 1357, which established worker-owned O & O supermarkets in Philadelphia. Indeed, over the past few years the UFCW has organized more new members than any other AFL-CIO union. Unfortunately, the union has also led in the creation of two-tier wage contracts.

Multi-tiered systems are one of the most insidious concessions management has devised and unions accepted. Seniority arrangements, for all their benefits, have always lowered the status and opportunities of new workers. Multi-tiered systems take that to an absurd extreme by imposing the largest burden of wage concessions on new workers. Within a few years, you have employees working side by side, doing the same job, with virtually the same experience, getting paid dramatically different wages: a perfect recipe for low morale and division in the workforce.

UFCW supermarket workers began switching to two-tiers in the late seventies. The Kroger supermarket chain has workers with five different wages ranging from $6.34 an hour to $10.02. Granted, in many cases local unions had to make concessions because of intense competition from non-union chains, but they didn't have to agree to two-tier contracts. The UFCW has negotiated more such contracts than any other union; from 1983 to 1986, according to the Bureau of National Affairs, it negotiated 107 two-tier contracts, 30

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percent of all such contracts. Even those in industries battered by low-wage foreign competition fared better. Moreover, while some unions have negotiated agreements in which the tiers merged after five years, many of the UFCW's allow for permanent castes. "We made a trade-off," a local leader explained after one such agreement was made for a grocery chain in the Washington-Baltimore area. "We traded the new hires to preserve things for our existing people."

Ironically, these contracts may backfire against the senior members who endorsed them since management now has a great incentive to squeeze out better-paid workers and hire in at the "B-scale." "If a contract allows you to do certain work at $8 an hour or at $12 an hour, you're not very smart to use the $12-an-hour workers," Eugene Brown, an official at Ralph's Grocery Co. in Los Angeles, told *The Wall Street Journal*. Ralph's laid off, or demoted, 1,800 high-paid clerks so it could use more lower-paid clerks.

To stop the spread of these contracts would have required not just the right policy position—in 1985 the UFCW national leadership came out against two-tier contracts—but political courage on the part of union leaders and selflessness from the rank and file. After all, if concessions are needed and you don't want to stick it to future workers, then current union members will have to take deeper pay cuts. "We think [two tier contracts] are abhorrent," says Al Zack, spokesman for the UFCW. "We think they're stupid. But the fact is that in elections people are going to vote their own self-interest." No example has been set by William Wynn, UFCW president. Over the past six years, as wages in supermarkets and meatpacking plants plummeted, his salary nearly doubled to $200,000.

International Union of Operating Engineers and the Laborers International Union of North America—These two unions represent the two ways organized labor has poisoned the construction industry: featherbedding and corruption.

In an industry known for preserving remarkably cushy, high-paid jobs, the operating engineers still maintain the most ridiculous assortment. For example, Local 14 of the Operating Engineers in New York demands that one person, a hoistman, be responsible solely for pushing the button that operates cargo elevators. (Another worker, from another union, must also be present to push the button when people, instead of materials, are going up the elevator.) Such a job pays about $50,000 a year in wages and benefits. Then there is the fellow who turns on the switch for the compressors and pumpmen who turn on pumps. Each can do nothing else. They also get paid about $40,000. The nicest work, if you can get it, is the job of master mechanic, who gets overtime pay—sometimes in six figures—as long as another member of his union is doing overtime, even if the master mechanic is home in bed. "There's no question the operating engineers have more featherbedding positions than any other New York City construction union in the city," says James McNamara, a construction expert in the city's office of employment. Electrical workers and the Teamsters also have a high proportion of such jobs on construction sites, he said.

While not known for featherbedding, the Laborers union, which represents the people who clear off construction sites, is considered one of the most corrupt unions in the country. New York City local 6A representing cement workers last year gained the distinction of being the first AFL-CIO union to be placed in court trusteeship because of thorough mafia infiltration. Angelo Fosco, the longtime national president, has appointed several "special international representatives." While they have not yet negotiated groundbreaking trade agreements, the quality of the appointments is undisputed: Al Pilotto distinguished himself as Chicago territorial boss of La Cosa Nostra, while Matthew Trupiano gained similar experience in St. Louis. Just as featherbedding increases the cost of construction, the shakedown has been factored into the price of doing business. Contractors go along with both practices to buy labor peace and avoid costly delays. The President's Commission on Organized Crime estimates that the mob adds about 20 percent to the cost of construction in New York.

While society pays for the featherbedding and corruption through higher rents and building costs, the workers suffer when organized crime negotiates sweetheart deals, allows health and safety standards to be ignored, or raids union pension funds. In one case, according to the President's Commission, a union official helped the mob siphon hundreds of thousands of dollars from a Laborers dental plan. Only 32 percent of the contributions to the Central States Joint Board Health and Welfare Trust Fund dental plan went to members' benefits, a rather inefficient administrative cost ratio. Nevertheless, Fosco keeps his presidency by regularly informing the membership of his record and, according to a former union vice president, by threatening to kill his opponents. ■

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MEMO OF THE MONTH

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 6, 1972

Dear Mr. Morris:

Mr. Gordon Liddy served as a member of the Domestic Council's staff from July 1971 to December 1971.

He was a very effective member of the staff and undertook numerous difficult assignments with great skill. He possesses a keen legal mind and is certainly highly qualified for the practice of law. He has approached all problems, even the most sensitive, with the highest sense of integrity.

He would be a very able member of the Bar here in the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

John D. Ehrlichman
Assistant to the President
for Domestic Affairs

Mr. William H. Morris,
Director
National Conference of Bar Examiners
333 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601

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THE HOSPITAL WITHOUT PATIENTS

A triumph of her majesty's civil service

by Jonathan Lynn & Antony Jay
Introduction by Leonard Reed

In 1985, WETA, Washington's public television station, imported another one of those BBC series. It was called "Yes, Minister" and portrayed the relationship between the elected officials of Britain and its permanent civil service. The program was not wildly popular in Washington, possibly because both the bureaucracy and the politicians found it too true to be funny. Later, it played on 46 of the nation's 280 public TV stations. It wasn't too popular out there either: nobody outside Washington believed that government could possibly be run that zanily.

The book that the show inspired consists of the fictional diaries of James Hacker, an aptly named member of parliament whose party has just won the elections and who finds himself a cabinet minister in charge (or so he thinks) of the Department of Administrative Affairs, which was created to control the civil service. Hacker's diaries are supplemented by those of his aide, Sir Humphrey Appleby, the senior civil servant in the department (who has no doubt about who's in charge), and by the recollections of Bernard Woolley, Hacker's private secretary. Appleby's and Woolley's notes are important because, as Lynn and Jay observe, Hacker was once a journalist, and has no particular talent for reporting facts.

Make a few allowances for the differences between parliamentary and presidential government, and *Yes, Minister* tells you a great deal about how America is governed. In Sir Humphrey's parlance, "permanence is power"; it is the civil servant, not the political appointee, who has tenure. The average minister lasts only 11 months; the term expectancy of a U.S. assistant secretary is slightly more than 18 months. These people, who are just passing through, cannot be permitted to interfere with the smooth running of government. The object—nay, the duty—of the civil servant is to "housetrain" the politicians or political appointees who have wandered into their midst. A new man is considered housetrained when he sees things through the eyes of the senior civil servants.

For instance, Hacker's party has come to power having pledged, among other things, to slim down the civil service; as head of the Department of Administrative Affairs, Hacker feels obliged to set a proper example and instructs Sir Humphrey to study how many people could be trimmed. Humphrey accepts the job with his usual, "Yes, Minister." Soon a story appears in the *Daily Telegraph*, noting with glee that Hacker has recruited 400 new civil servants in his "economy drive." Humphrey is astonished that Hacker is upset: "You demanded a complete survey.... If you create more work, more people have to be employed." Humphrey then points out the advantages to his boss. Hacker can put out a press release announcing that, because of the successful conclusion of the economy drive, the staff is now being trimmed by 400 people.

On the pleasure-pain principle of behavior modification, Hacker finds himself paying increasing heed to Humphrey's guidance. Or, as Hacker puts it, a certain warmth has developed in their relationship—as between a terrorist and his hostage. The day will come when an apprehensive Hacker will be called to No. 10 Downing Street. There the Prime Minister's political advisor will tell him the civil service is now saying he's a pleasure to deal with. "That's what Barbara Wodehouse says about her prize-winning

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spaniels," the advisor will add.

The following excerpt from Hacker's diaries comes from an earlier point in his training, when the minister is still tugging at his leash. We pick up the story as Hacker is telling of his embarrassing performance that day before Parliament.

—*Leonard Reed, contributing editor*

March 15th

I can hardly believe it. Parliamentary questions today were a disaster! A totally unforeseen catastrophe. Although I did manage to snatch a sort of Pyrrhic victory from the jaws of defeat. The first question was from Jim Lawford of Birmingham South-West who asked me about the government's pledge to reduce the number of administrators in the Health Service. I gave the prepared reply, which was a little self-congratulatory—to the civil servants who wrote it, of course, not to me!

Somebody had leaked this wretched paper to Lawford. He was waving it about with a kind of wild glee, his fat face shining with excitement. Everyone was shouting for an answer. Humphrey—or somebody—had been up to his old tricks again, disguising an increase in the numbers of administrative and secretarial staff simply by calling them by some other name. This looked like it was going to be a real political stink. Had it stayed secret, it would have been seen as a brilliant maneuver to pass off an increase of staff by 7 percent as a decrease of 11.3 percent—but when leaked, it suddenly comes into the category of a shabby deception. What's more, an *unsuccessful* shabby deception—quite the worst kind!

Thank God one of my own backbenchers came to my rescue. Gerry Chandler asked me if I could reassure my friends that the inquiries would not be carried out by my own department but by an independent investigator who would command the respect of the House. I was forced to say I was happy to give that assurance.

March 16th

This morning started none too well, either. Roy picked me up as usual, at about 8:30. I asked him to drive me to the Ministry, as I was to spend all morning on Health Service administration. He started needling me right away. "Chap just been talking about that on the radio," he said casually. "Saying the trouble with the health and education and transport services is that all the top people in government go to private hospitals and send their kids to private schools."

This egalitarian stuff, though daft, is always a little dangerous if it's not watched very carefully.

"And they go to work in chauffeur-driven cars," added my chauffeur. I didn't deign to reply. So he persisted.

"Don't you think there's something in it? I mean, if you and Sir Humphrey Appleby went to work on a number 27..."

I interrupted him. "Quite impracticable," I explained firmly. "We work long enough hours as it is, without spending an extra hour a day waiting at the bus stop."

"Yes," said Roy. "You'd have to make the bus service much more efficient, wouldn't you?"

Roy chuckled. "You were lucky they didn't ask you about that new St. Edward's hospital," he said jovially.

"Why?"

"Well..." he smacked his lips. "They finished building it 15 months ago—and it's still got no patients."

"I suppose," I said, "the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) haven't got enough money to staff it."

"Oh, it's got *staff*," said Roy. "Five hundred administrators. Just no patients." Could this be true? It hardly seemed possible.

"Who told you this?" I asked cautiously.

"My mate Charlie," he explained. "He knows all right. He's the driver for the Secretary of State for Health."

When I got to the office I summoned Humphrey at once. I told him straight out that I was appalled by yesterday's debate.

"So am I, Minister," Humphrey said. I was slightly surprised to find him agreeing so vehemently.

"The stupidity of it...the incompetence," I continued.

"I agree," said Humphrey. "I can't think what came over you."

I blinked at him. "I beg your pardon?"

"To concede a full *independent* inquiry..."

"Your stupidity, Humphrey!" I roared. "*Yours!*"

"*Mine*, Minister?"

"Yes. Yours. How could you drop me in it like that?" To be fair, he personally hadn't dropped me in it. But his precious department had. Humphrey, however, seemed disinclined to apologize.

"A small omission from the brief. We can't foresee everything." Then his face resumed an expression of pure horror. "But to concede a full independent inquiry..."

I'd had enough of this. "I didn't particularly want an inquiry either," I pointed out. "But if

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"Well, as I warned you, the drivers' network is not wholly reliable. Roy has got it wrong."

I was very relieved. "How did you find out this good news?" I asked.

"Through the Private Secretaries' network."

you're drowning and somebody throws you a rope, you grab it."

"It was not a rope," replied Sir Humphrey. "It was a noose. You should have stood up for the department—that is what you are here for."

"Nowhere in my brief was there the slightest indication that you'd been juggling the figures so that I would be giving misleading replies to the House," I said.

"Minister," said Humphrey in his most injured tones, "you said you wanted the administration figures reduced, didn't you?"

"Yes," I agreed.

"So we reduced them."

Dimly I began to perceive what he was saying. "But...you only reduced the *figures*, not the actual number of administrators!"

Sir Humphrey was pained. "You said reduce the figures, so we reduced the figures."

"How did it get out?" I demanded. "Another leak. This isn't a department, it's a colander." I was rather pleased with that little crack. There was another silence. "Anyway," I concluded, "at least an inquiry gives us a little time."

"So does a time bomb," observed my permanent secretary.

"If only you'd said we'd have a departmental inquiry," he complained, "then we could have made it last 18 months, and finally said that it revealed a certain number of anomalies which have now been rectified but that there was no evidence of any intention to mislead. Something like that."

"But there *was* an intention to mislead," I pointed out.

"I never said there wasn't," Sir Humphrey replied impatiently. "I merely said there was no evidence of it." I think I was looking blank. He explained.

"The job of a professionally conducted internal inquiry is to unearth a great mass of no evidence. If you say there was no intention, you can be proved wrong. But if you say the inquiry found no *evidence* of intention, you can't be proved wrong."

I had to deal with the matter in hand, namely that I had agreed to an independent inquiry. "Couldn't we," I suggested thoughtfully, "get an independent inquiry to find no evidence?"

"You mean, rig it?" enquired Sir Humphrey coldly. This man's double standards continue to amaze me.

"Well...yes!"

"Minister!" he said. Bloody hypocrite.

"What's wrong with rigging an independent inquiry if you can rig an internal one, I should like to know? Though I already know the answer—you might get *caught* rigging an independent inquiry."

"No, Minister, in an independent inquiry everything depends on who the chairman is. He absolutely has to be sound."

"If he's sound," I remarked, "surely there's a danger he'll bring it all out into the open?"

Sir Humphrey was puzzled again. "No, not if he's sound," he explained. "A sound man will understand what is required. He will perceive the implications. He will have a sensitive and sympathetic insight into the overall problem." He *was* suggesting that we rig it, in fact.

"Ah," I said. "So 'sound' actually means 'bent?'

"I mean," he tried again, "a man of broad understanding." I decided to short-circuit the process by making some suggestions.

"Then what about a retired politician?"

"...and unimpeachable integrity," added Humphrey.

"Oh I see." I paused to think. "What about an academic or a businessman?"

Sir Humphrey shook his head.

"Okay," I said, knowing that he had someone in mind already. "Out with it. Who?"

"Well, Minister, I thought perhaps...a retired civil servant."

I saw his point. "Good thinking, Humphrey."

"Sir Maurice Williams could be the man," he went on.

I wasn't too sure about this. "You don't think he might be too independent?"

"He's hoping for a peerage," said Humphrey quietly, with a smile. He appeared to think he was producing an ace from up his sleeve. I was surprised. "This won't give him one, will it?"

"No, but the right finding will give him a few more Brownie points."

"Right," I said decisively. "Sir Maurice it is."

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March 17th

A long meeting with Bernard Woolley today.

"You asked me to find out about that alleged empty hospital in North London," began Bernard. I nodded.

"Well, as I warned you, the driver's network is not wholly reliable. Roy has got it wrong."

I was very relieved. "How did you find out this good news?" I asked.

"Through the Private Secretaries' network."

Although the Private Secretaries' network is sometimes a little slower than the drivers' network, it is a great deal more reliable—in fact almost 100 percent accurate. Bernard explained that at this hospital there are only 342 administrative staff. The other 170 are porters, cleaners, laundry workers, gardners, cooks, and so forth. This seemed a perfectly reasonable figure. So I asked how many medical staff.

"Oh, none of *them*," replied Bernard casually, as if that were perfectly obvious in any case.

"We are talking about St. Edward's *Hospital*, aren't we, Bernard?"

"Oh yes," he answered cheerfully. "It's brand-new, you see," he added as if that explained everything.

"How new?"

"Well," he said, "it was completed eight months ago, and fully staffed, but unfortunately there were government cutbacks at that time and there was, consequently, no money left for the medical services."

"A brand-new hospital," I repeated quietly, to make sure I had not misheard, "with 500 administrative staff and no patients?" I began to recover myself. "My God," I said. "What if I'd been asked about this in the House?" Bernard looked sheepish. "Why didn't I know? Why didn't you tell me?"

Bernard explained that apparently one or two people at the DHSS knew. And they have told him that this is not unusual—in fact, there are several such hospitals dotted around the country. It seems there is a standard method of preventing this kind of thing leaking out. "Apparently it has been contrived to keep it looking like a building-site, and so far no one has realized that the hospital is operational. You know, scaffolding and skips and things still there. The normal thing."

March 22nd

Today I had a showdown with Humphrey over Health Service Administration. I had a lot of research done for me at Central House because I was unable to get clear statistics out of my own department. They continually change the basis of comparative figures from year to year, thus making it impossible to check what kind of bureaucratic growth is going on.

I learned this morning that in ten years the number of Health Service administrators has gone up by 40,000 and the number of hospital beds has gone down by 60,000. Furthermore the annual cost of the Health Service has gone up by one and a half billion pounds. In real terms! But Sir Humphrey seemed pleased when I gave him these figures. "Ah," he said smugly, "if only British industry could match this growth record."

"Growth?" I said. "Growth?" He nodded. I was staggered. "Are you suggesting that treating fewer and fewer patients so that we can employ more and more administrators is a proper use of the funds voted by Parliament and supplied by the taxpayer?"

"Certainly." He nodded again.

I tried to explain to him that the money is only voted to make sick people better. To my intense surprise, he flatly disagreed with this proposition.

"On the contrary, Minister, it makes *everyone* better—better for having shown the extent of their care and compassion. When money is allocated to Health and Social Services, Parliament and the country feel cleansed. Absolved. Purified. It is a sacrifice."

This, of course, was pure sophism. "The money should be spent on patient care, surely?"

"With respect, Minister," began Humphrey, one of his favorite insults in his varied repertoire, "people merely care that the money is not *seen* to be misspent."

I reminded him of the uproar over the mental hospital scandals. Cynical as ever, he claimed that

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such an uproar proved his point. "Those abuses had been going on quite happily for decades," he said. "No one was remotely concerned to find out what was being done with their money—it was their sacrifice, in fact. What outraged them was being told about it."

"Are we or aren't we agreed that there is no point in keeping a hospital running for the benefit of the staff?"

"Minister," he admonished, "that is not how I would have expressed the question."

Then he fell silent. I pointed out that that was how I had expressed it. Clearly, he had no intention of answering any straight question unless it was expressed in terms he found wholly acceptable. I gave in. "All right," I snapped, "how would you express it?"

"At the end of the day," he began, "*one* of a hospital's prime functions is patient care."

"One?" I said. "One? What else?"

He continued as if I had not said a word. "But, until we have the money for the nursing and medical staff, that is a function that we are not able to pursue. Perhaps in 18 months or so..."

"Eighteen months?" I was appalled.

"Yes, perhaps by then we may be able to open a couple of wards," he said.

I instructed him to open some wards at once—and more than a couple. He countered by offering to form an interdepartmental committee to examine the feasibility of monitoring a proposal for admitting patients at an earlier date. I asked him how long that would take to report.

"Not long, Minister."

"How long?"

I knew the answer before he gave it, "18 months," we said in unison.

"Terrific!" I added sarcastically.

"Thank you," he replied, charmingly unaware.

"I suggest that we get rid of everyone currently employed at the hospital and use the money to open closed wards in other hospitals. And when we can afford it," I added sarcastically, "we'll open St. Edward's with *medical staff*! If you would be so kind."

Humphrey then argued that if we closed the hospital now we would delay the opening of it *with patients* for years. "You talk," he said accusingly, "as if the staff have nothing to do, simply because there are no patients there."

"What *do* they do?" I asked.

Humphrey was obviously expecting this question. He promptly handed me a list comprising all the administrative departments: Contingency Planning Department, Data and Research Department, Finance, Purchasing Department, Technical Department, Building Department, Maintenance, Catering, Personnel, Administration.

I couldn't tell, as I read, if Humphrey was playing a practical joke. Department 10 contains administrators to administrate administrators. I studied his face. He appeared to be serious. "Humphrey," I said, very slowly and carefully. "There-are-no-patients! That-is-what-a-hospital-is-for! Patients! Ill-people! Healing-the-sick!"

Sir Humphrey was unmoved. "I agree, Minister," he said, "but nonetheless all of these vital tasks listed here must be carried on with or without patients."

"Why?" I asked.

He looked blank. "Why?"

"Yes. Why?" I repeated.

"Minister," he said, "would you get rid of the Army just because there's no war?"

I replied firmly. "Enough is enough. Sack them all."

He refused point-blank. He said it was impossible. He repeated that if we lost our administrators the hospital would *never* open. So I told him just to sack the ancillary workers. He said the unions wouldn't wear it. I compromised. I instructed him to sack half the administrators and half the ancillary workers. I told him to replace them with medical staff and open a couple of wards. I also told him that it was my last word on the subject.

March 25th

Today I paid an official visit to St. Edward's Hospital. It was a real eye-opener. The Welcoming Committee—I use the term in the very broadest sense—was lined up on the steps. I met Mrs. Rogers, the chief administrator, and an appalling Glaswegian called Billy Fraser who rejoices in the title of Chairman of the Joint Shop Stewards Negotiating Committee.

"How very nice to meet you," I said to Fraser, offering to shake his hand.

"I wouldn't count on it," he snarled.

I was shown several empty wards, several administrative offices that were veritable hives of activity, and finally a huge deserted dusty operating theater suite. I inquired about the cost of it. Mrs. Rogers informed me that, together with Radiotherapy and Intensive Care, it cost two and a quarter million pounds. I asked her if she was not horrified that the place was not in use.

"No," she said cheerfully. "Very good thing in some ways. Prolongs its life. Cuts down running costs."

"But there are no patients," I reminded her.

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She agreed. "Nonetheless," she added, "the essential work of the hospital has to go on."

"I thought the patients were the essential work of the hospital."

"Running an organization of 500 people is a big job, Minister," said Mrs. Rogers, beginning to sound impatient with me.

I told her that this situation could not continue. Either she got patients into the hospital, or I closed it.

She started twittering. "Yes, well, Minister, in the course of time I'm sure. . ."

Billy Fraser then started. "Look here," he began, "without those 200 people this hospital just wouldn't function."

"Do you think it's functioning now?" I inquired.

Mrs. Rogers was unshakeable in her self-righteousness. "It is one of the best-run hospitals in the country," she said. "It's up for the Florence Nightingale award." I asked what that was, pray.

"It's won," she told me proudly, "by the most hygienic hospital in the Region."

I told her that I'd said my last word and that 300 staff must go, doctors and nurses hired, and patients admitted.

"You mean, 300 jobs lost?" Billy Fraser's razor-sharp brain had finally got the point.

I spelt it out to him. "A hospital is not a source of employment, it is a place to heal the sick."

He was livid. "It's a source of employment for my members," he yelled. "You want to put them out of work, do you, you bastard?" he screamed. "Is that what you call a compassionate society?"

"Yes," I answered coolly, "I'd rather be compassionate to the patients than to your members."

"We'll come out on strike," he yelled.

I couldn't believe my eyes or ears. I was utterly delighted with that threat. I laughed in his face.

"Fine," I said happily. "Please, do go on strike, the sooner the better. And take all those administrators with you," I added, waving in the direction of the good Mrs. Rogers. "Then we won't have to pay you."

March 26th

It seems I didn't quite wipe the floor after all.

Bernard and I turned on the television news. First there was an item saying that the British government is again being pressured by the U.S. to take some more Cuban refugees. And then—the bombshell!—Billy Fraser came on, and threatened that the whole of the NHS in London would be going on strike tonight at midnight if we laid off workers at St. Edward's.

Humphrey came in at that moment. "Oh," he said, "you're watching it."

"Yes," I said through clenched teeth. "Humphrey, you told me you were going to have a word with the unions."

"I did," he replied. "But well, what can I do?" He shrugged helplessly. I asked him what we were supposed to do now. But Humphrey had come, apparently, on a different matter—of equal urgency. "It looks as if Sir Maurice Williams's independent inquiry is going to be unfavorable to us," he began. I was appalled. Humphrey had promised me that Williams was sound.

"Unfortunately," murmured Sir Humphrey, embarrassed, looking at his shoes, "he's also trying to work his peerage in his capacity as Chairman of the Joint Committee for the Resettlement of Refugees."

I inquired if there were more Brownie points in refugees than in government inquiries. He nodded. I pointed out that we simply haven't got the money to house any more refugees. The phone rang. I was told rather sharply by a senior policy adviser that Number Ten had seen Billy Fraser on the six o'clock news. By "Number Ten" he meant the PM. Number Ten hoped a peace formula could be found very soon. A most beautiful solution occurred to me. A thousand refugees with nowhere to go. A thousand-bed hospital, fully staffed.

Humphrey saw what I was thinking, of course, and seemed all set to resist. "Minister," he began, "that hospital has millions of pounds' worth of high-technology equipment. It was built for sick British, not healthy foreigners. There is a huge Health Service waiting list. It would be an act of the most appalling financial irresponsibility to waste all that investment on. . ."

"But. . ." I said carefully, "what about the independent inquiry? Into our department? Didn't you say that Sir Maurice's inquiry was going to come down against us? Is that what you want?"

"I see your point, Minister," he replied thoughtfully.

I told Bernard to reinstate, immediately, all the staff at St. Edward's, to tell Sir Maurice we are making a brand-new hospital available to accommodate 1,000 refugees, and to tell the press it was my decision. Bernard asked me for a quote for the press release. "Tell them," I said, "that Mr. Hacker said that this was a tough decision but a necessary one, if we in Britain aim to be worthy of the name of. . .the compassionate society." I asked Humphrey if he was agreeable to all this.

"Yes Minister," he said. And I thought I detected a touch of admiration in his tone. ■

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by Phillip Longman

How the Government Cooks the Books

The budget deficit is bigger than you think

In October, 1908, a landmark exhibit opened in a private gallery on lower Broadway in New York. According to the show's ebullient sponsors, 62,808 attended. "Pictures that Tell Stories of a City's Waste" was the draw. Everyone came to see the budget of the City of New York.

Even *The New York Times* was excited. "The idea of the exhibition is to show with striking tables and in graphic form what the city is doing, what it needs to do, and how it is day by day wasting a large part of its income," it reported.

It was the Progressive movement at its peak, and literally millions of Americans—not just a few green eye-shade types—wanted to see what was in their public budgets. Two years later, another exhibit of New York's budget, blown up and pasted on boards drew a million spectators wanting to know where their tax dollars were going. "No voter, certainly no householder or housewife, can merely stroll through this exposition without receiving a certain understanding of the kind of men who ought to be selected to attend to the several branches of such an immense concern," the *Times* opined. Held over by popular demand, the exhibit soon inspired similar displays throughout the country, fueling a genuinely popular movement.

We could stand to rekindle some of that curiosity. Today we debate the deficit ad nauseam, but we are evading a fundamental problem. The number we identify as the deficit—the $200 billion-ish figure we hear—includes only a fraction of our actual debt. The additional debts will eventually come due. For instance, the government has promised to pay out trillions of dollars in Social Security payments, but none of that accumulating debt shows up in each year's budget deficit. Similarly, big Pentagon costs such as military pensions and weapons systems will cost us later, even if they aren't on this year's books. Rather than pay some of these costs now, Congress (and many states) impose these obligations on future taxpayers, hoping that somehow, the money will be there. We don't have to stand in line to see the budget. But we *do* need to see it clearly.

Phillip Longman is the author of Born to Pay: The New Politics of Aging America, *to be published by Houghton Mifflin in August. He is also a research consultant at Americans for Generational Equity.*

Bomb throwers

To really understand the budget, you have to understand the accounting on which it is based. Accounting is supposed to give an accurate and useful description of how an institution is taking in money and spending it. Its usefulness depends on the kind of questions one wants answered. If the questions are short-term—"How much money do we have now?," "How much will we have at the end of the year?"—then the calculations are fairly straightforward. Just keep track of the cash-flow.

Back when the federal government did little more than guard the coasts and deliver the mail, annual cash-flow accounting could provide an adequate picture. But the expansion of government services has created a series of long term obligations extending years, even decades. Each day, entitlement programs, such as Social Security and Medicare, obligate the government to pay benefits far into the future, as workers build up claims by paying into them. Indeed, since the end of World War II, nearly all the growth in federal spending as a percentage of GNP, excluding interest costs, has been in programs that promise to pay future benefits. Today's budgets create tomorrow's liabilities.

So what about next year? What about ten or 20 years from now? To answer the fundamental question of whether an institution is living beyond its means, one has to know how fast

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capital assets are likely to wear out, what it will cost to replace them, and what big contracts will come due. For this reason, the federal government requires all publicly held companies to disclose their finances using an "accrual" basis rather than simply counting up annual receipts and expenses. For the same reason, 25 states use accrual systems, and ten are converting to them.

It makes sense. Under accrual accounting, liabilities are reported as they are accumulated, rather than when they are paid off. Of course, those big liabilities can be paid off over a period of years. So accountants using the accrual method take that into consideration by calculating how much should be set aside each year to help pay off those long-term expenditures. It's still bean counting, but it's bean counting with vision.

Governments that don't use accrual accounting can find themselves swamped by debt. During the first half of the seventies, the City of New York used simple cash-flow accounting to keep its books and each year proudly reported a balanced budget. Actually, it was slouching towards bankruptcy. For years, the city had been accruing enormous long-term liabilities—especially public-employee pensions—that went unreported in its annual budget. In 1961, 25 percent of the money the city collected from taxes was paid out to retired city workers. By 1975, that figure had jumped to 40 percent. Even when the comptroller's office did make projections about future retirement benefits, it did so using life and disability tables developed near the turn of the century—when a cop was unlikely to live two decades in retirement.

The rest is a familiar story. By 1975, the city was broke. Wary bankers denied the city further credit, forcing it to to beg the Ford administration for relief. Eventually the feds came through with $4.5 billion in federal loan guarantees. But there was a little-known twist. The federal government agreed to the bailout only if New York switched to accrual accounting.

Nothing could have been more hypocritical. The much-heralded, nonpartisan, professional Congressional Budget Office still tallies up the federal budget on a year-to-year basis, just like New York City did. So does the Office of Management and Budget, controlled by the White House. Last year's $220.7 billion deficit was a measure of annual losses, of how much red ink was spilled during the time it takes the earth to revolve around the sun. That's an important number to know, of course. The more money the government borrows in any given year the less there is available for consumers and industry. But the deficit figure—bandied about by columnists and congressmen trying to prove a point—is ultimately misleading, because it ignores the liabilities accrued, but not yet due. Like New York City in the seventies, the federal government is kidding itself.

So how big *are* the deficits? You'd better sit down. In 1975, Arthur Andersen & Co., one of the country's "Big-8" accounting firms, developed a consolidated financial statement for the U.S. government using accrual accounting and other generally accepted accounting principles. It looked at things such as the pensions we've promised and weapons systems commitments. It found that the accrual-basis deficit for the previous year was more than $95 billion. The government had admitted to a deficit of only $6.1 billion.

Needless to say, the hemorrhaging has gotten worse under Reagan. In 1984 the government declared a deficit of $185.3 billion, but Andersen found it to be $333.4 billion. To eliminate that deficit would have required a 113 percent increase in individual taxes—assuming that such an increase did not itself cause a recession or depression.

Not everyone has ignored the problem. One hotbed of reformist accounting is the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Financed by public accounting firms, the municipal securities industry, plus state and local governments, GASB was founded in 1984 after years of what its chairman, James F. Antonio, characterizes as "smoke, fire, and brimstone." GASB's mission is to set what are known as "generally accepted accounting principles" for public entities.

It's hard to picture accountants as bomb-throwers, but the GASB manifesto, which includes a call for accrual accounting, could have radical implications for the federal government. Were the federal government to adopt GASB's rules, it would have to report that its real deficits are roughly $150 billion larger than it now admits.

Backdoor borrowing

Which programs account for the difference between the budget deficit Arthur Andersen found and the one we've all read about? GASB officials say the biggest culprit is unfunded pension liabilities, the commitment we've made to today's public employees about the money they will receive upon retirement. It's a cost we incur today, but, under the current system of accounting,

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So how big *are* the deficits? In 1984, the government declared a deficit of $185.3 billion, but Arthur Andersen & Co. found it to be $333.4 billion.

don't start paying until tomorrow. "With public employee pensions, you get the full benefit of an employee's service this year. But the full cost of that service doesn't come due for many years into the future," said Antonio.

Pensions used to be a far simpler matter than they are today. In 1818, Congress established its first federal employee pension program: a means-tested plan for Revolutionary War veterans. Today the federal government operates 38 separate retirement programs for its employees and their dependents. Most of these programs are very small, ranging from accounts for former presidents and their widows to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Corps Retirement system. The majority of federal workers, however, are covered by two giant programs, the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Military Retirement System (MRS).

Federal workers, except those at the top levels of management, earn as much or more than their counterparts in the private sector, and have higher pensions as well. Civil servants hired before 1983, for example, may retire at age 55, after 30 years of service, with an annual pension equal to 56 percent of their average salary during their peak three years of earnings. Virtually no private sector plan replaces such a high percentage of a retiree's previous salary. Of the 50 largest plans offered by Fortune 500 companies in 1983, none offered replacement ratios of more than 44 percent.

Civil servants don't finance these benefits themselves. Civilian employees set aside 7 percent of their salary for their retirement. But that only covers 12 percent of the system's *current* costs, let alone the costs of future pensions. The rest comes out of general revenues.

All totaled, the commitments made to federal employees are staggering, despite recent legislation reducing military pensions for those who have yet to enlist. The pensions of those who are currently in uniform will cost $444.3 billion, according to the Treasury Department. The liabilities of the civilian CSRS pension fund are even larger—$537 billion as of September 1985.

The government doesn't have to pay all those pensions at once, of course. The cost is spread over years as civil servants retire. Yet because of the way the government keeps its books, these huge liabilities totaling several hundred billion dollars are not even acknowledged in each year's solemn announcement of the budget deficit, nor are they counted as part of the national debt. If the federal government followed the practice of private pension plans by amortizing these liabilities over a 40-year period (that is, pre-paying them in yearly installments) the cost would come to roughly *85 percent* of each year's payroll, or approximately $43 billion, according to the Grace Commission.

By not amortizing these pensions now, we put off the hard choices—leaving them to future taxpayers who may be forced to choose between paying the retirement benefits for someone who worked on Atoms for Peace or building a new space program. The least we could do is to admit to this backdoor borrowing.

Pork without the smell

Underfunded pensions aren't unique to the federal government. Many states have also put off pension funding. While columnists such as David Broder have written about vibrant, well-managed state governments, the truth is that they, too, are encumbered with enormous pension debt. More than five thousand separate state and local pension plans cover nearly 12 million public employees. Estimates of their unfunded liabilities are difficult to come by, since different jurisdictions use different accounting methods and assumptions. But a recent study by Robert Inman, published by the National Bureau for Economic Research, found that the unfunded

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liabilities of teachers' pensions amounted to more than $400 billion in 1980. That liability rose 250 percent during the seventies.

The unfunded liabilities of public employee pension systems are a "quiet" crisis, which makes them all the more dangerous. Any government can borrow from the future by underfunding its pension programs without having to admit how high the deficits are. The same is true of state and local government. Unlike when the government sells bonds, under-funding today doesn't crowd out private borrowers or raise interest rates. All the pain comes later.

That's why no constituency is storming the state house in Sacramento or Baton Rouge, demanding that the pensions of the 1990s be reined in. If anything, politicians have learned to love big pensions—seeing them as an easy way to help their public-employee constituents without being accused of being big spenders. (Even a small state like West Virginia has amassed $1.5 billion in unfunded pension liabilities for its teachers.) It's pork barreling without the stigma.

That's true even in states that have a reputation for fiscal responsibility. In California, for example, the constitution states that any bond issue more than $300,000 must go to the voters for a referendum. Voters must be told when and by what means the principal and interest will be repaid. Even to get such a proposition on the ballot requires a two-thirds majority in the legislature. Another kind of debt—a pension, which can cost millions more—can be incurred without a vote by the taxpayers and with only a bare majority of the legislature. No current funds need be appropriated. In 1983, the state government passed "super safety" benefits for 10,000 state employees. The cost was $300 million. The measure sped through the legislature and was signed into law in three days.

This kind of politicking has left the California State Teacher's Retirement System in deep trouble. Right now its cumulative deficit stands at more than $10 billion. Individual teachers contribute 8 percent of their salaries to the fund, and local districts match that amount. But that doesn't cover the cost. According to David Cox, a consultant to the California Assembly's Public Employee Committee, part of the problem is that when the fund was created in 1972, the contribution rate was intentionally set low to win political support for the program and "ease the shock" of its cost. Compounding the problem are the actuarial table writers who guessed wrong about how many teachers would opt for early retirement.

In Missouri last year, members of the legislature voted themselves and state workers a $13 million increase in retirement benefits. For a few veterans, such as the bill's sponsor, state senator Richard M. Webster, annual retirement benefits will exceed their current annual salary. State employees with 30 years experience can retire at age 55 with full benefits. The bill quickly cleared the Senate and the House with no debate.

The ruse can be worth it to politicians. They know it's important to keep public employees appeased. Nothing loses more votes than garbage or snow piling up on the street, or teachers, firemen, and policemen threatening to strike. For a congressman or senator, being on the wrong side of the federal bureaucracy can make it harder to help constituents cut through red tape, win grants, or recover lost Social Security checks or refunds from the IRS. A president who crosses the federal bureaucracy had better worry that his initiatives and executive orders will be quietly ignored or subverted. Then, of course, public employee unions make substantial contributions to candidates they like. The National Education Association doled out $2.9 million to congressional candidates during the 1985-86 election cycle; the National Association of Letter Carriers, $1.4 million. Since more than a quarter of the electorate is employed by the public sector, these unions command voting blocs no prudent candidate can ignore. Retired federal employees, by themselves, are a weighty constituency. In each of five states—California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Virginia—they and their beneficiaries totaled over 100,000 in October 1985. Nationally, they are 1.9 million strong.

Indecent exposure

Besides pensions, there are other costs we've pushed off until the future that don't show up in the annual budget deficit. Take insurance. The federal government is the nation's largest insurer, but it doesn't charge high enough premiums to cover the vast risks it has assumed. It insures loans to students, farmers, small businessmen, veterans, shipbuilders, home buyers, rural utilities. It insures bank depositors and the pension programs of 40 million Americans. These insurance programs expose future taxpayers to a total, contingent liability estimated by the Office of Management and Budget to exceed $3 trillion.

Are we going to have to pay all those policyholders? Barring a depression, probably not. But defaults on government-backed loans

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will place big pressures on an already tight federal budget, even if they won't necessarily bankrupt us. That's because Congress, unlike Mutual of Omaha, doesn't build up big reserves, enough to cover the benefits it is likely to pay out. Government insurance programs typically have no reserves or woefully insufficient ones. The GAO has lambasted the crop insurance program, pointing to annual losses of $100 million. The same is true of flood insurance, which has lost money every year for 20 years and has only crept into the black after a 200 percent increase in premiums.

Government isn't a business, of course. There are risks that the government should assume that private industry won't, like covering bank loans. But by undercharging today's beneficiaries, we put off costs until tomorrow. It's a form of borrowing that doesn't show up in the annual budget, but is still very real.

Consider the Maritime Administration, which was authorized in 1972 to guarantee loans to U.S. shipbuilders. Since then the fishing, maritime-freight, and off-shore drilling industries have been pummeled, making many of the ships the Administration helped underwrite unnecessary and unprofitable. Congress underfunded the program and now we're picking up the tab. Yearly defaults on this program alone, which were running less than $100 million through 1984, climbed to $1.4 billion last year.

Or take the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC), which insures the savings of thrift institution depositors. Between 1981 and 1986, as the government lifted regulations and left the thrifts free to make speculative investments, the number of insolvent thrifts increased from 16 to 445. Their misfortune is now ours. Over the past five years, the FSLIC's insurance fund has dwindled from a $6.3 billion surplus to a yawning deficit. The GAO estimates that the FSLIC will need at least $8 billion in new revenue just to cover near-term costs.

The Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) is similarly underfunded. Founded in 1974, it stands behind private pension plans the way FSLIC stands behind thrifts. Most private pension plans still appear to be well-funded. But already—long before the enormous baby-boom generation reaches retirement age—we are seeing an increase in the number of plans in default. This year, the PBGC will take in $425 million and pay out $690 million.

That's not a huge difference, but it is likely to grow. The private pensions that the federal government insures—"defined-benefit plans"—

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY

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Detroit Free Press

In her analysis of Coleman Young's management style, Edmonds shows how the Detroit mayor has become more and more insulated from reality with each passing term (he's now in his fourth). Young's kitchen cabinet, once made up of community leaders from outside government, is now dominated by embedded officials who avoid dissent to protect turf. Susceptible to flattery and disdainful of criticism, the mayor has conditioned his staff to fear bringing him bad news: 300 tons of surplus federal food, meant for Detroit's poor, rotted in government warehouses in 1983 before Young even knew there was a spoilage problem.

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are legally required to have minimal reserves that are invested and making money. Yet the average private sector plan has assets equal to only 77 percent of its actual liability, according to a study by Richard Ippolito of the Labor Department. More than a third have funding below 50 percent. When these companies fail, the federal government assumes a retiree's pension up to $22,380 per year. In 1986, the bankrupt Wheeling-Pittsburgh steel company dumped $476 million of its pension liabilities on the PBGC. The recent collapse of the LTV Corporation added another $420 million. PBGC's long-term deficit is now $2.4 billion and growing. If Congress is to fulfill its promise to insure these pensions, it will have to put up more money.

"Too emotional"

When we talk about accounting, we're really talking about politics—the choices and sacrifices that we, as a society, have to make. Unfortunately, our current system of accounting brings out the worst in politicians of all stripes—encouraging them to spend now and pay later. Under our current system, the Reagan administration has proposed selling land and other public assets, pointing to big revenue increases. This is absurdity. When we sell land, we're ignoring future revenues those assets could have produced. Liberals have their own way of cloaking tomorrow's bills. The annual budget for a favorite social program like the Small Business Administration hides the fact that many of those who receive SBA loans will default. Ultimately, the way we add up government spending is as political and as important as the spending itself.

It would be nice if there was one simple accounting technique that could clean up the government's books. But as pedestrian as accounting may seem, it is still a developing science. Just accounting for a single, relatively simple item, like highway maintenance, is a real intellectual challenge. When the government spends money to maintain a highway, the appropriation is entered in the books as a one-time expense for this year. Ideally, you would have an accounting method that could measure how a little money spent now on highways is actually saving a whole lot later on. But getting the books to reflect that is very difficult. While it's better than our current system, even accrual accounting has its flaws. Under accrual accounting, weapons are listed as assets—solid, worth a certain price—even if they are totally useless on the battlefield and have to be replaced. But federal funds to train America's next crop of electrical engineers go on the books as an expense, not an asset.

Yet even if there is no perfect accounting method, that doesn't mean we can't start asking the right questions. Throughout government, accountants are making pivotal decisions that demand scrutiny.

Last year the Treasury Department came up with a massive financial statement of the federal government's assets and liabilities. Buried in the document was an extraordinary political statement. The Social Security system's $4.647 trillion in unfunded liabilities were listed as "contingent" expenses, like banking insurance, that we may or may not have to pay. Fred Wolf of the General Accounting Office says that accounting for Social Security's unfunded liabilities is so politically charged that his office prefers not to take a position. "It's just too emotional," he says. "Before we can get the accounting right, we need Congress to come right out and say what Social Security is. Is it a promise that can never be broken, or something else, like food stamps?"

We need a new budget debate. If these kinds of issues were up for discussion, there might be a little more outrage about our real debt—whether it's caused by a pension increase or the sale of a revenue-producing piece of land. If the public understands a bit about the real debt it's running up, perhaps it will, like those curious New Yorkers at the turn of the century, pay attention to the writing on the wall. ■

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TIDBITS AND OUTRAGES

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"Coveted by the world's most discerning people."

"Only a select few will be able to call it home."

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◆

EVERYONE GOT TO SIT IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR

Hambrecht and Quist, an investment banking firm, recently rented out Alcatraz for a lavish dinner banquet. Six hundred guests dined on roast quail with chanterelles and lime sauce, risoto with porcini, vegetables, and white chocolate with cream anglaise. Later, actors staged a prison fight and breakout.

●

THERE WAS A CHAPTER ON THE FEELING OF FREEDOM YOU ONLY GET WHEN YOU TURN OVER ALL YOUR FINANCIAL RECORDS TO A FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT JUDGE

Albert Lowry, whose book *How You Can Become Financially Independent By Investing in Real Estate* made *The New York Times* best-seller list in 1978, filed for bankruptcy May 13 in Los Angeles.

◆

IF I CATCH HIM AGAIN, HE'LL BE IN THE AIR-CONDITIONED DOG HOUSE

In the new book *Christian Wives: Women Behind the Evangelists Reveal Their Faith in Modern Marriage*, Tammy Faye Bakker says she broke off two engagements before marrying Jim Bakker because the men had wandering eyes. "I believe when a man makes up his mind to marry a woman," she said, "the flirting should stop."

JUST LIKE CABINET MEETINGS

As part of its coverage of the economic summit, *The Washington Post* ran an article headlined, "Mixed Reviews for Bed in Italy, Reagan Sleeps Well, First Lady Doesn't."

◆

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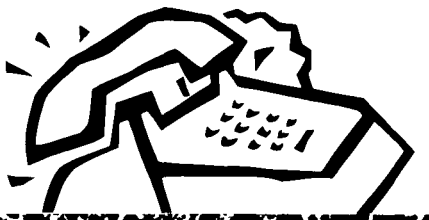

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George Marshall's lessons of statecraft and public service

MARSHALL ARTS

by Evan Thomas

In an age when government is populated by leaky self-promoters, the qualities of George C. Marshall seem quaint. Imagine Henry Kissinger or Al Haig turning down million-dollar offers to write their memoirs. Marshall did it repeatedly, explaining to one publisher that he had not served his whole life in government to sell his story to the *Saturday Evening Post*. The aging general was so self-effacing that as army chief of staff during World War II he refused to be decorated while young men were dying abroad. He was so duty-bound that when President Truman called him out of well-earned retirement after the war to go to China as a special envoy, Marshall instantly said yes, without so much as asking his wife (who was quite bitter about it). As secretary of state from 1947 to 1949, he was so unpretentious that he refused a body guard, saying that he would "rather be murdered than embarrassed." Over the years, Marshall has even been spared by Cold War revisionists, who have noted that as secretary of state he tried on several occasions to tone down the Truman administration's more inflammatory anti-communist rhetoric.

The somewhat hazy glow around Marshall brightened this June when the general was remembered for launching the European Recovery Plan that bears his name 40 years ago at a Harvard commencement speech. His image is further buffed by the fourth and final volume of his official biography*, the completion of a project begun some 30 years ago by Marshall's faithful Boswell, Forrest C. Pogue. The book is thorough but uncritical and, like General Marshall's speeches, flat and a little boring. It does not put much flesh and blood on the icon, nor does it grapple with an intriguing question raised by Marshall's career, particularly his unfortunate last tour of duty: is it possible to be too virtuous?

Marshall was not only above reproach, he was above the fray; he never stooped to petty squabbles or schemed against his bureaucratic rivals. Yet the flip side of statesmanlike bearing is Reaganesque detachment. Delegation is an effective management style but only, as President Reagan has learned, if you are delegating to the right people.

Pogue's new volume picks up the old soldier as he becomes a statesman after World War II. As an army chief of staff who had to referee between feuding theater commanders, Marshall knew a great deal about diplomacy, but he was hardly a geopolitical thinker. He was, for instance, about the last major government official to give up on the hope of cementing a peaceful alliance with the Soviets. But no matter. Marshall had the good sense to pick able assistants who did understand a changing world, most notably Marshall's chief of policy planning, George F. Kennan. Indeed, Marshall seems to have always been away giving a speech or attending a conference in South America when crises erupted. Luckily, he did not have to worry much; his undersecretaries—Dean Acheson and Robert Lovett—were more than able to cope in his absence. When Marshall did give orders, he was usually brief. Tasking Kennan to prepare a plan to rescue Europe from post-war ruin, Marshall had two words of instruction. "Avoid trivia," he said.

Marshall's disdain for politics and bureaucratic gamesmanship could be counterproductive. He frowned on all leakers. "Planners don't talk," he warned Kennan. Yet Marshall so intimidated Kennan that Kennan suffered silently while the press and politicians dangerously exaggerated his containment doctrine. So apolitical that he refused to vote, Marshall utterly failed to comprehend what motivated congressmen. Advised that he needed to curry favor with Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Arthur Vandenberg in order to win passage of the European Recovery Plan, Marshall balked. "He assumed that Vandenberg was motivated by national interest and therefore required no cultivation," recorded another able lieutenant, Chip Bohlen. The solution was to name the plan after Marshall. "That

Evan Thomas is Washington bureau chief of Newsweek *and co-author of* The Wise Men.

**George Marshall: Statesman 1945-1959.* Forrest C. Pogue. *Viking, $29.95.*

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will sell a whole hell of a lot better in Congress than if they name it after me," remarked President Truman. Marshall dutifully testified before Congress, but it was Bob Lovett who stroked Vandenberg, sharing cocktails and top secret cables with him in the evenings after work.

In the 1948 election, Marshall took the noble goal of a nonpartisan foreign policy to new and somewhat shaky heights when he quietly offered to step down as soon as Dewey beat Truman in order to let John Foster Dulles take over as secretary of state and ease the transition. Marshall had to be tactfully reminded that as long as Truman was president, he had constitutional responsibility for foreign policy.

When Truman won his famous upset, Marshall resigned anyway. Typically, he had been putting off for six months a kidney operation on a pair of tumors the size of baseballs. But Marshall, who was nearly 70, was not allowed to rest for long. Two months after the Korean War broke out in June of 1950, Truman fired his vexatious and incompetent defense secretary, Louis Johnson, and called on Marshall, the Organizer of Victory in World War II, to take over the Pentagon once again as secretary of defense.

Marshall's first major decision was a blunder. He wired his field commander, General Douglas MacArthur, to "feel unhampered tactically and strategically" as he drove his army over the 38th parallel between the two Koreas toward China. This time, Marshall had taken detachment entirely too far. He would have been much wiser to order MacArthur to stop right where he was, to restore the status quo before the North's invasion of the South, and not to try to subjugate all of Korea. For MacArthur, seized by one of his megalomaniac bouts with destiny, was determined to end his career by cleansing the Pacific of communism, even if that meant going to war with a billion Chinese.

Marshall worried about MacArthur's mad dash to the Chinese border, but he made no attempt to rein him in. In part, he hewed to the principle first established by Lincoln with Grant: that once a field commander has been assigned a mission "there must be no interference with his method of carrying it out." But personal factors also weighed on the general. Although he typically had not hesitated to accept Truman's summons to duty, he was old and tired—perhaps not quite up to the rigors of running the Pentagon during wartime. More important, he felt he could not show any trace of ill will toward MacArthur. The American Caesar had regarded Marshall as a rival out to do him in ever since Marshall had been the bright young staff officer and MacArthur the dashing field commander in World War I. Marshall bent over backward not to fuel MacArthur's paranoid delusion. He was as determined as ever to show that personal likes or dislikes had no place in wartime councils. "I have no feelings," Marshall would say, "except those I reserve for Mrs. Marshall."

Marshall's luster kept the secretary of state, Dean Acheson, from second guessing his judgment. Acheson had been warned by the Chinese that if MacArthur came too close to their border, they would jump into the war. Indeed, "we had the clearest idea among ourselves of the utter madness and folly of what MacArthur was doing up North," Acheson later wrote. "But we sat around like paralyzed rabbits." Why? Acheson was awed by Marshall and uncharacteristically humble around him. Though officially outranked by the secretary of state, Marshall had to insist that Acheson follow protocol and enter a room before him. Lovett, again serving as Marshall's deputy, was equally cowed. Though he mocked MacArthur (imitating the vain-glorious general's habit of combing his last few strands of hair across his bald pate), Lovett never questioned Marshall's decision to allow MacArthur to plunge on. Like Acheson, he was so transfixed by Marshall's essential goodness he could not see that Marshall had made the wrong decision.

In late November, 300,000 Chinese troops exploded around MacArthur's overextended army and practically drove him off the Korean peninsula. The war dragged on three more years to accomplish what MacArthur had won in September. Another 25,000 American soldiers died.

Pogue makes no attempt to explain Marshall's failure; in fact he assigns him no blame. But it can be argued that Marshall was blinded by an overdose of principle when the situation called for a touch of expediency. Marshall's forbearance toward MacArthur may have been the "right" thing to do given their assigned roles and long-rumored rivalry. But had Marshall stopped MacArthur, he would have saved a lot of lives.

Yet, Marshall finally did recommend that MacArthur be relieved a few months later, after the general kept spouting off to Republican congressmen about the need to "unleash" Chiang Kai-Shek on the Red Chinese. Characteristically, Marshall did not shy from accountability for his tragic blunder. After reviewing MacArthur's record, Marshall showed a willingness to admit error not often seen around Washington these days. He told Truman, "We should have fired MacArthur two years ago." ■

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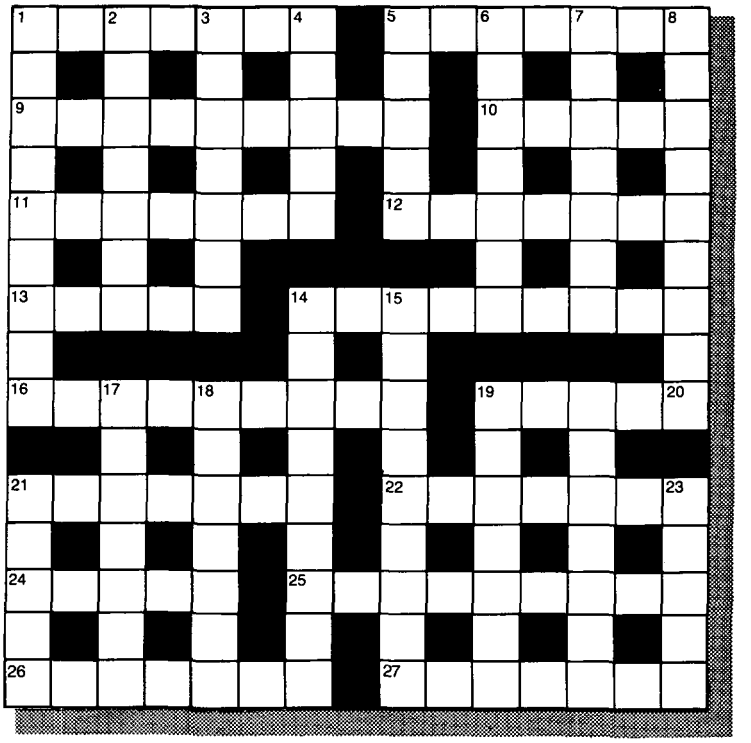
POLITICAL PUZZLE

by John Barclay

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2, 3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word.



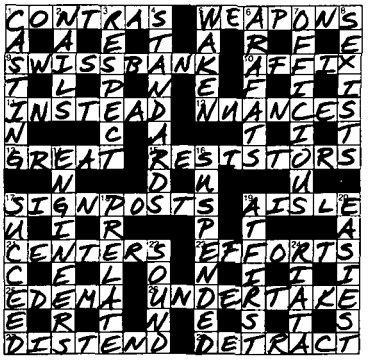
ACROSS

1. Uninvited guest bent the H out of whack and took in crazy bet. (7)
5. Limits paying guests, we hear. (7)
9. Gave rise to great need in a different setting. (9)
10. Before Lent begins, the lewd come back to stay. (5)
11. Cancels genes at assembly. (7)
12. Near miss for 99 in confused entry. (4, 3)
13. Communist trailed monarch and made mistake. (5)
14. Clear odd Lee cup tax. (9)
16. Cactus makes about 200 United Nations lutes. (9)
19. Unfair fighter from strange tribe. (5)
21. Long lip distorted for election. (7)
22. Single modified hydrogen for spin. (7)
24. Oriental pleasure in census history. (5)
25. Trash torn carefully provides guidance. (5, 4)
26. Strange men stay in country with this. (7)
27. After 26 Across, many may stay, not sail away. (7)

DOWN

1. Drivers swear badly about departed. (9)
2. Unusual great North American bird. (7)
3. Purified deer at a round-up. (7)
4. Checks without balances? (5)
5. Presidential candidate active in bed. (5)
6. Root for the extremist? (7)
7. Goddess stirring treacle. (7)
8. Bring in trays late as sign of sorrow. (5, 4)
14. Immediate problem, e.g., re enemy position. (9)
15. Place of worship displayed Hart decal. (9)
17. Checks with office about total depravity. (5, 2)
18. Compositions arranged in suite. (7)
19. Drunken gob hit VIP. (3, 4).
20. Opera hero managed strain after final test. (7)
21. Former article consumed by Romans. (5)
23. Deer with White House ambitions? (5)

Answers to last month's puzzle:



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POLITICAL BOOKNOTES

Real Rape. Susan Estrich. *Harvard University Press, $15.95.* The strange man held an ice pick to Susan Estrich's throat. "Push over, shut up, or I'll kill you," he said. She obeyed. After he raped her, he drove away in her car, never to be caught.

Thirteen years later, Estrich's fear and anger still linger. Her memory of being violated animates her teaching of sex discrimination at Harvard Law School (where I was her student) and, now, a provocative book. In *Real Rape*, Estrich focuses not on violent attacks by strangers but on what she calls "simple rape": a man the victim knows—a date, ex-boyfriend, or estranged husband—bullies or tricks her into sex against her will, without brandishing weapons or breaking bones. Simple rape, Estrich argues, is still real rape and deserves punishment.

Few people question the wisdom of locking up men who leap from the bushes with ice picks. But most men, and many women, assume that a little psychological, and even physical, arm-twisting is a legitimate part of the mating game. Estrich disagrees. Forced sex wounds its victim, even if she knows the man and unwittingly has put herself in a vulnerable position. That goes for the cheerleader who gets drunk at a fraternity party and the woman whose date simply won't take "no" for an answer after she invites him up for coffee. A woman ought not to have to risk injury by attacking her attacker, she adds.

Estrich acknowledges that recent legal changes have favored rape victims. "Shield" laws prevent defense attorneys from introducing irrelevant evidence of a victim's past sexual conduct. Courts and legislatures have eased rules that a victim must notify police immediately after being attacked and that her testimony must be corroborated. The demand that women demonstrate "utmost" (read: superhuman) resistance in the case of simple rape has become, in most instances, a requirement of "reasonable" resistance.

Despite these adjustments, Estrich contends that courts continue to distrust women who claim they were raped under any but the most harrowing circumstances. Victorian notions that respectable ladies would prefer to die than have their virtue sullied intertwine with pseudo-Freudian truisms about women's "unconscious desire" to be forcefully dominated. Estrich skillfully dissects the case law to reveal how such dubious and contradictory assumptions go unchallenged in court. More important, these assumptions—filtered through the actions of trial judges, lawyers, and law enforcement officials—reinforce the popular view that most victims of simple rape "asked for it."

Estrich offers many convincing examples, including this 1984 case from North Carolina: The victim's former boyfriend told her he had a "right" to have sex with her. He added that he would "fix" her face to show he "was not playing." During their previous "consensual" relationship, he had beaten her, and she had passively engaged in intercourse. Despite the victim's protest that the relationship was over, the man undressed her, pushed her legs apart, and penetrated her. She cried.

The North Carolina Supreme Court overturned the man's conviction. The court noted that the intercourse was against the woman's will, but it found that the defendant had not used "force," as proven by the victim's failure to resist more strenuously. The court, says Estrich, scorned the woman's reaction as that of " 'sissies' in playground fights. It is the reaction of people who have already been beaten, or never had the power to fight in the first place. It is...the most common reaction of women to rape."

Estrich urges courts to shift their attention from how much force was used and whether it was resisted to the defendant's intent. Surprisingly, American courts rarely debate intent in rape cases, preferring to focus on overt acts. But Estrich would convict a man for "negligently" ignoring a woman's refusal to have sex. If the defendant acted "unreasonably," as defined by the court, he could not claim that he mistook "no" for a playful "yes."

Criminal law punishes other negligent behavior. Negligent homicide or manslaughter can lead to a prison sentence. Estrich predicts that it would take only a few rape convictions under a negligence standard for men to get the message and begin respecting a woman's right to refuse sexual advances.

Estrich has drawn an audacious line in the dirt. Her solution, however, contains a major flaw: the definition of "reasonable" behavior. A defendant could argue that where he comes from, everyone expects a man to keep asking, even when a woman says no. He kept asking his girlfriend, and she kept saying no, until finally she didn't say anything and they had sex. No physical force. Would a typical jury call that unreasonable and therefore rape? Should genuine confusion send a man to prison?

It's not too harsh to call Estrich's solution a lawyer's answer, with all the slipperiness that implies. Negligence and reasonableness have little meaning apart from a particular social context. Estrich envisions a "reasonable man [of] the eighties" who has shed all vestiges of the species' sexist past. She doesn't argue that this man actually exists but implies that changes in the law will contribute to his emergence. Details of the mutation remain a mystery.

—*Paul M. Barrett*

The Personal Vote: Constituency Service and Electoral Independence. Bruce Cain, John Ferejohn, and Morris Fiorina. *Har-*

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vard University Press, $25.00. In both U.S. House and British parliamentary elections, recent decades have seen an increase in what these authors call the personal vote: that portion of a candidate's electoral support arising from his or her personal qualities and performance record rather than from, say, voters' party identification. So says this comparative study which is based on public opinion surveys and interviews with politicians. The American upswing is well known. In Britain the trend is also up, though personal voting there is meager by American standards.

What accounts for the increase? Cain, et al. put their money on the surge in the number of contacts between incumbent legislators and their constituents. Their analysis is as resourceful and sophisticated as we are likely to get. They have data on such matters as the size of House members' staffs and the percentages of constituents who say they have been contacted by incumbents or their offices. Three times as many Americans reported such contacts in 1978 as in 1958. On the British side, similar contacts are higher per capita, even though parliamentary staffs are virtually nonexistent. In both countries there is a significant relationship between attentiveness to constituents and payoff in votes.

What consequences should we expect from greater voting based on personal factors? More sluggish election turnover rates, the authors suggest. And as legislators beef up their independent electoral bases, other consequences include weaker legislative parties, less presidential clout with legislators, greater interest-group influence, greater emphasis on particularistic, district-centered policy—in general, more policy stalemate.

In fact, party-seat swings in the U.S. House elections have sagged lately. The authors' theory as to why is certainly plausible. But on policymaking matters, has the U.S. displayed that pattern more in recent times than before? The House Democratic party seems to be at least as effective a policy instrument now as it was under, say, Roosevelt after 1937, Truman, or Kennedy. The party caucus is much stronger and the Dixiecrats have subsided. Reagan's pragmatic success with Congress in 1981-1982 will stand comparison with any president's in this century. If increased interest group influence is a worry, look at the passage of the thick Naderite regulatory statutes around 1970, major deregulatory legislation in the late seventies, and the recent tax reform. As for particularism, it is hard to beat 19th-century pork-barrel bills or the Smoot-Hawley tariff. In Britain, despite an inching up of MP independence on roll calls, party government seems alive and well under Thatcher.

—David R. Mayhew

Beyond National Borders: Reflections on Japan and the World. Kenichi Ohmae. *Dow Jones-Irwin, $16.95.* If you've ever wondered why U.S.-Japan trade talks are so protracted, circuitous, and exasperating, consider this: In Japan, the expression "that person says things clearly" is a term of disparagement, implying that the person has gone too far. A Japanese man proposing marriage to a Japanese woman may say something like, "You know, I don't dislike you," or, "Would you wash my briefs?"

Anecdotes like this are amusing, but as Kenichi Ohmae warns his countrymen in this slender, impassioned book, Japan's inability to communicate with the rest of the world has pushed that country to the brink of economic disaster. The Japanese have only themselves to blame, he says, for their image as predatory industrial animals who dump their products all over the world and leave behind unemployment lines and shuttered factories. Protectionist sentiment has become a part of U.S. national policy, and one presidential candidate has made it the centerpiece of his campaign, but Japan has done little to explain itself. "It is hard to say which is more trying, our innocence or our arrogance," Ohmae writes.

Originally published in Japan where it was a bestseller, this English translation gives Americans a rare opportunity to hear a prominent Japanese talk about his own country. American-educated Ohmae, who runs the Tokyo office of McKinsey & Co., the management consulting firm, has plenty of acerbic criticism for politicians and businessmen on both sides of the Pacific. But he saves his harshest words for his compatriots: "We don't know how to behave in international circles. We make 'ugly Americans' in Europe look polished. Half the time we don't even know we look foolish.... We often behave like Yakuza, or an underground society...the only time we speak up is when our Prime Minister apologizes to the United States."

Ohmae's thesis is that the world economy has become so interlinked that national borders are irrelevant. Goods and services flow around the globe with little regard for lines on a map. For example, Adidas, the big West German firm, sells shoes in Japan that it makes in Taiwan. Yet the Japanese, in an increasingly cosmopolitan world, retain the hermetic, insular attitude that resulted from the traumas of the forties. "Now that we are on stage with America and Europe, we better act like and talk like world citizens," he writes.

Most of what Americans learn about Japan comes from other Americans—the academics, journalists, and economists whose praise of "Japanese management" has helped create a superiority complex among the Japanese and resentment among their best customers: Americans. In fact, Ohmae argues, American companies are more successful at managing business on an international scale than Japanese firms, and he points to the success of companies such as Johnson & Johnson and Schick in Japan and Kodak and Ford in Europe.

In the book's most controversial section, Ohmae argues that the much-ballyhooed U.S. trade deficit with Japan is the stuff of myth because our way of keeping score is outmoded. Trade figures don't account for the vast amount of

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American goods that are made and sold within Japan by U.S. companies that have diligently earned "insider" status.

Ohmae clearly enjoys throwing out a few ideas for pure shock effect. He proposes Anchorage, Alaska, as the ideal New Age corporate headquarters, since it is equidistant to Japan, Europe, and the U.S. He suggests that since Japan has money but little land while Latin American countries have lots of land but little money, Japan should buy real estate in Brazil and Argentina to grow rice and reduce Third World debt. But most of his book is deadly earnest, and it deserves as wide an audience in the U.S. as it had in Japan. For all the arcane statistics that surround the trade debate, it is only common sense that the U.S. and Japan have far more shared interests than cause for confrontation.

—*David Graulich*

The Rule of Experts: Occupational Licensing in America. S. David Young. *Cato Institute, $7.95.* This mistitled book is a useful, if at times baffling, monograph on the legal and economic status of occupational groups in America. A brief summary of recent literature, it is not about how experts rule, but about how various providers of services manage to extract monopoly profits from the American public.

The right to practice a profession or provide a service is subject to more or less strict control through licensing requirements in every state. Young estimates, citing an unpublished source, that nearly a thousand occupations are regulated. Most licenses are merely taxes, but those for dozens of occupations make serious demands: years of schooling, practical experience, and state-administered testing.

This is all in the public interest, right? Wrong, says Young. The impetus for licensing comes from producers, not consumers, and therefore often costs the public in the form of monopoly profits, low quality performance, and lack of care for the poor.

The trouble is that the remedies for this disturbing reality that Young suggests—public certification instead of licensing, private certification, and lawsuits—are unworkable, unlikely, or equally costly. "Certification and other nonintrusive schemes have been shown to afford substantially the same protection to consumers as licensure, but without the cost or violation of basic freedoms." Actually, they haven't, and Young cites no evidence that they would generally suffice. And since one major difficulty with professional discipline today is that professionals control the public agencies, what makes anyone think they would be less able to control private ones? That leaves lawsuits. "Civil liability suits are the oldest and least interventionist response to quality breakdowns in professional markets," Young says. I agree. But they are also woefully inefficient.

Is there a solution? Probably not a practical one. But if we recognize that the real problem is occupational definition, there is at least a theoretical answer. Licensing laws sweep too broadly because they are not restricted to the particular acts (surgery, courtroom advocacy) that require the high degrees of skill for which licensing makes sense. Laws that open up some parts of the vast realms of "lawyering" and "doctoring" and other vocations to those with lesser, though adequate, skills are the only reasonable hope. But don't hold your breath.

—*Jethro K. Lieberman*

Keeper of the Rules: Howard W. Smith of Virginia. Bruce J. Dierenfield. *University Press of Virginia, $25.* Quick: who is chairman of the Rules Committee in the House of Representatives? Only Congress junkies can answer that question today (Claude Pepper), but a generation ago liberals cursed the Rules Committee and its reactionary chairman, Howard W. Smith of Virginia. The author of this informative biography, Bruce J. Dierenfield, writes that in the fifties Smith was widely regarded as

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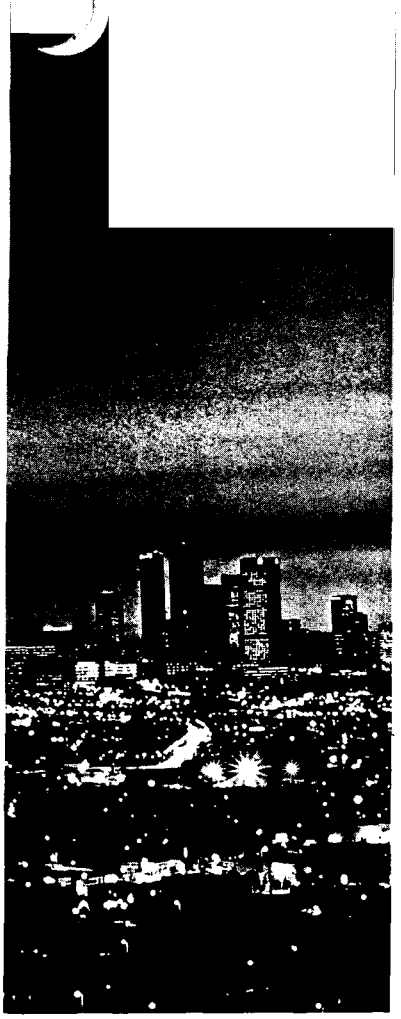

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the third most powerful figure in Washington, surpassed only by Dwight D. Eisenhower and House Speaker Sam Rayburn. An ardent segregationist who used his committee to hold up or weaken civil rights legislation, Smith, at the very least, deserves a place next to Bull Connor and the "old" George Wallace in the demonology of the civil rights movement. Instead, he's largely been forgotten, making it all too easy for pundits to get nostalgic about the days when Congress was ruled by a few powerful men.

Trained in the precepts of strict constructionism at the University of Virginia law school, Smith dedicated his public career to fighting the expansion of the federal government. After serving as a judge in Alexandria, he was elected to the House, where he became a leading opponent of FDR's New Deal. He believed that Congress rationalized its intervention in business activity through a misreading of the Constitution's commerce clause; it then abdicated its imagined power to the president, who set up federal agencies to issue regulations that Smith judged illegitimate. (His abhorrence of extending federal power did not keep Smith from sponsoring the activist—and anticommunist—Smith Act, which led to the prosecution of scores of radicals in the late forties.)

Smith's opportunity to wield clout against the expanding federal government came with his ascent to Rules chairman in 1954. Created in 1789, Rules was for a century an inconsequential committee charged with perpetuating old procedural rules. But at the end of the 19th century, the congressional leadership beefed up its powers to counter special interests and promote the will of the majority on tax and tariff bills. Through the twenties, Rules served to strengthen the hand of whichever party controlled the House. During the Roosevelt administration, however, it became a means for a dissident coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats to gum up the system. Smith's committee could determine when a bill would be sent to the floor, whether it would be accompanied by open debate, and whether it could be subjected to an unlimited number of amendments. Up to a point, it could even keep a bill from coming to the floor.

When the 1957 civil rights bill came before his committee, Smith sided with his state's most ardent segregationists (who included James J. Kilpatrick, then editor of the *Richmond News Leader*). "The Southern people have never accepted the colored race as a race of people who had equal intelligence. . . as the white people of the South," said Smith. To stop the bill, he employed a variety of delaying tactics, including simply leaving town for ten days. The Civil Rights Act that finally passed established an important precedent, but was so weak that it had to be followed up with another civil rights bill in 1964. On that go-round, Smith attached an amendment outlawing sex discrimination—a proposition so seemingly ridiculous that Smith believed it would never be adopted by Congress. But it was.

That defeat demonstrated that Smith couldn't stop the enfranchisement of either blacks or women. A key reason was that Smith's obstructionism had provoked a congressional revolt in which Rules was packed with more liberal members. The committee was further weakened by a variety of procedural reforms in the mid-1970s, that weakened the seniority system. The legacy of these reforms—which Dierenfield, maddeningly, fails to discuss—is that Congress today is more decentralized, offering special interests a multitude of avenues to coopt legislation. Enemies of special-interest politics occasionally argue that Congress should reimpose discipline by restoring power to key senior committee chairmen. But Dierenfield's book is a reminder that congressional fiefdoms like Rules were themselves captives of special interests. Isn't there a better solution to special-interest gridlock than a return to the system that gave us Howard Smith?

—Timothy Noah

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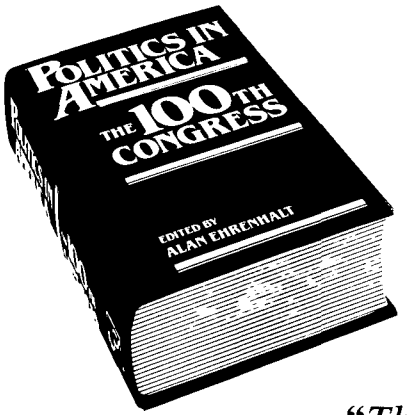

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